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ISLAM AND THE CRUSADES

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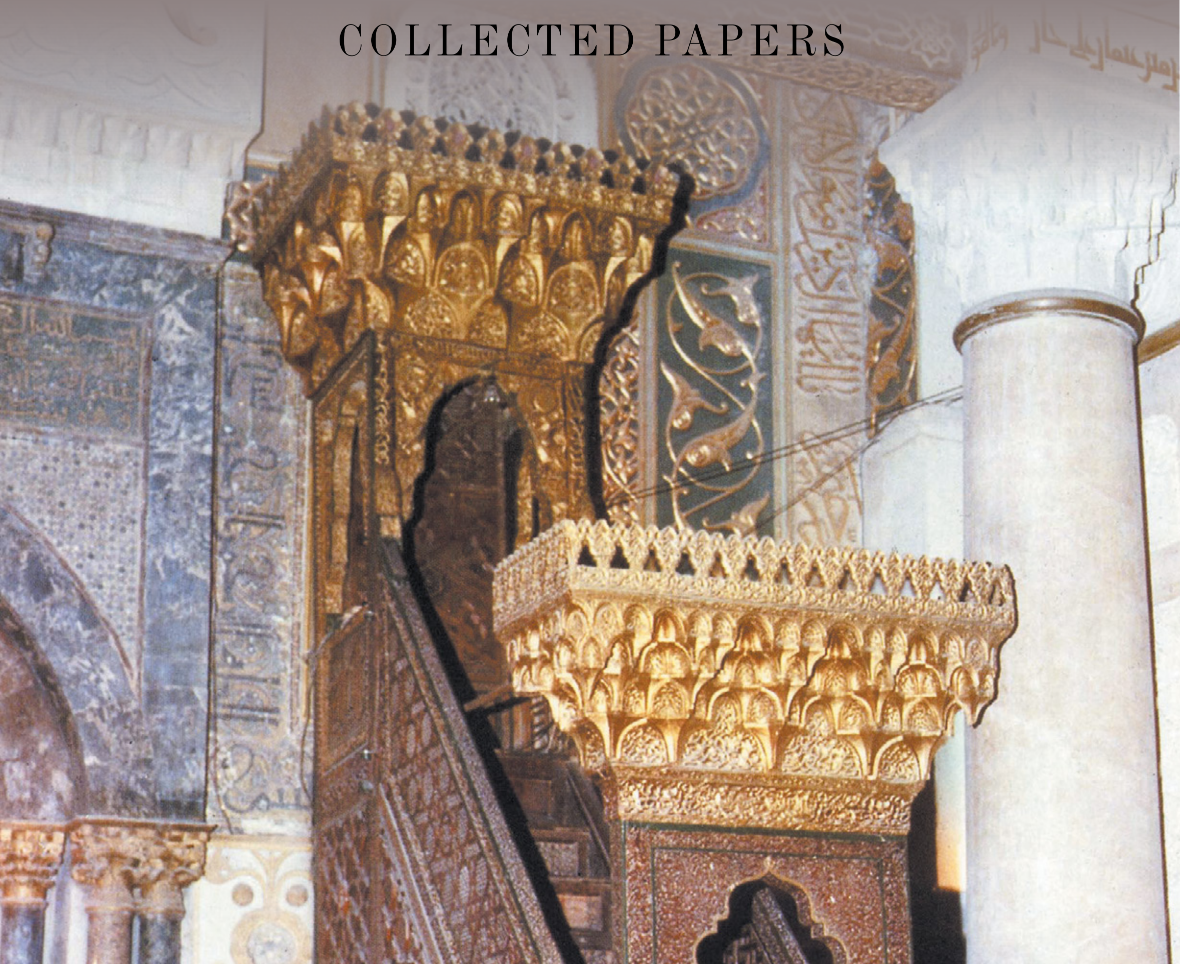

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As always, I am extremely indebted to my husband Robert for his advice and support during the preparation of this book.

Preface

In summer 1967, both I and my future husband Robert resigned from the Civil Service (where we both worked as administrators) to embark on a two-month visit to Turkey as a prelude to applying to the University of Oxford to work in Islamic studies. Accordingly, it was an exciting moment in autumn 1967 when, on return from that fascinating exploration of Turkey, I visited Somerville College. This was the 'sister' college of Girton in Cambridge University, where I had studied for a degree in Modern and Medieval European Languages. On arrival at Somerville (without an appointment), I asked if I could speak to the Principal, Dr Barbara Craig. She graciously agreed to meet me. I told her about my wish to embark on another BA degree, this time in Middle Eastern Studies and Arabic. To my amazement she said 'yes' immediately and invited me to start my studies the following year. She explained that she was an archaeologist and had lived for five years in Baghdad. She said she was especially delighted for me to join Somerville, as I would be the first undergraduate ever to study Arabic in the college.

The task of learning Arabic proved both fascinating and difficult, but I was fortunate to be taught by very good scholars who specialised in different aspects of classical Arabic. Arabic grammar was the particular specialty of Professor Alan Jones. His first-year class in Arabic was large and lively, and in my year it included two students who later became well-known scholars of Islamic studies, Stefan Sperl and the late Norman Calder. In 1969–70 I took

leave from the Arabic degree to go to Iran with my husband, whose doctoral thesis required a year of fieldwork there. Living and working in Iran made it natural for me to start learning Persian. On my resuming my Arabic degree in Oxford in 1970, I also began studying Turkish. In the final two years of the degree I was taught the Qur'an and classical literature by Professor Alfred Beeston and medieval Arabic historical texts – especially the *World History* of Ibn al-Athir – by Mr Donald Richards. I also studied aspects of Islamic thought, including the writings of al-Ghazali, with Father Richard McCarthy, SJ. The teaching which I received from these last two lecturers was for me alone. It was an absorbing experience. But I still had a lot to learn and I realised at the end of my studies in Oxford that it would take a very long time to master Arabic to the requisite level. So, in 1972, on my arrival in Edinburgh, where my husband had been appointed to a post in art history, I began a PhD. This involved deciphering and translating two unpublished twelfth-century Arabic historical manuscripts in the British Library about the Artuqid Turkish dynasty in Diyar Bakr. It was a dauntingly steep learning curve, not made any easier by the need for us both to raise two daughters – who ensured that academic work did not dominate our lives unduly. In 1979 I was awarded the doctorate and began a Lectureship in Arabic at the University of Edinburgh. Thereafter, I remained permanently committed to the study of medieval Arabic texts as the fundamental core of my research.

My first decade in the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies – 1979–89 – was very heavily overloaded with teaching first-year Arabic five times a week and Islamic history (seventh–seventeenth century) three times a week; both courses lasted three terms, the entire academic year. Moreover, I supervised many postgraduates, some of whom were working on medieval Arabic historical texts. My first book was an English translation of Volume XXVII of *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa'l-muluk*, the famous history of al-Tabari. My contribution, entitled *The Waning of the Umayyad Caliphate*, was published in Albany, New York, in 1989. That project made me engage seriously both with poetry and with high prose, which was a new and challenging experience. A year later, the core of my PhD was published in Leiden as a book entitled *A Muslim Principality in Crusader Times: The Early Artuqid State*. The turbulent atmosphere which had prevailed in the Department in Edinburgh then changed dramatically in 1990 with the arrival of Professor

Yasir Suleiman, who was appointed to the Chair of Arabic. He proved to be a very skilful and dynamic leader and a most encouraging colleague. I count him a very dear friend.

In the 1980s at Edinburgh I conducted as much research as my unusually heavy teaching load would allow. My writing was not theory-driven but rather was always based on information and ideas gained from a careful reading of primary source materials – chronicles, monumental inscriptions, sermons, letters and poetry – in Arabic, Persian and Turkish.

A good number of the papers in this volume deal with aspects of the Crusades, and my way into that subject was indirect. In 1982 the recently retired Professor of Arabic at the University of Edinburgh, William Montgomery Watt, a true celebrity in the field, relinquished his editorship of the *Islamic Surveys* series which he had founded a couple of decades earlier. The Secretary of the Edinburgh University Press, Archie Turnbull, invited me to take on that job. I agreed to do so and thus began a happy association that lasted until Archie's retirement in 1987. He was, in many respects, every author's dream publisher: dynamic, visionary, inspiring, and possessed of an infectiously can-do attitude, and with a sixth sense which enabled him to ferret out key gaps in many fields despite having only a necessarily superficial acquaintance with them. Before long he was encouraging me to write a book on the Crusades. He had a very specific brief. He did not want me to produce yet another conventional history on this subject written from a Western European viewpoint. Archie urged me not to continue in this tradition, but instead to write a book entirely based on how the Muslims had viewed the sudden and totally unexpected invasion of the Middle East by the Crusaders and their conquest of the Holy City of Jerusalem in 1099. However, at that time my teaching and administrative responsibilities made progress on such an intriguing project impossible. Nevertheless, the idea remained tucked away in a corner of my mind.

A decade later, after I had been studying for a long time the fraught relationship in the eleventh and twelfth centuries between the Sunni Muslim caliphate of Baghdad and the military power of nomadic Seljuq Turkish sultans, a new phase in my research began. I was lucky enough to win a research award that freed me from all departmental responsibilities for two years (1994–6). Almost simultaneously, however, I was struck down with

an illness that nearly proved fatal. While I was recuperating, I took stock of what direction my research should take. I had planned to write a book on the Seljuq Turks in Anatolia, a subject of absorbing interest to me and quite a few other scholars, but of relatively little concern to a wider public. I now realised that my previous research could also be put to profitable use by concentrating on events in the Middle East during the crucial years 1100–1300.

It was then that Archie's idea of a book on the Crusades drifted back into the forefront of my mind. It was exciting to contemplate a book that would also have an audience outside the charmed circle of Middle Eastern specialists. As it began to take more definite shape and as I broadened my reading, I realised how the entire history of the Crusades had been colonised by Western historians. Their natural academic centre of gravity lay in Christian Europe, and their resultant Eurocentric bias, acknowledged or not, had for generations distorted perceptions of the meaning and impact of the Crusading movement as a whole. So I resolved to try my hand at telling the story from an exclusively Muslim point of view and deliberately using only medieval Arabic sources – also a distinct bias, but a salutary one in these circumstances. It is all but incredible that this had not been attempted before.

There had of course already been a few scholars who had used Arabic sources alongside Western ones in writing about the Crusades; W. B. Stevenson, who wrote a book called *The Crusaders in the East* in 1907, is perhaps the best early example. I was also impressed by Emmanuel Sivan's brilliant pioneering analysis of the evolution of jihad as an ideology and its role in the Muslim response to the Crusades in his book, *L'Islam et la Croisade*, published in 1968. But there still remained many topics to discuss in any overall coverage of Muslim reactions and responses to the phenomenon of the Crusades; these needed to be considered through a consistently Muslim lens alone, 'uncontaminated' by Western prejudices. On the other hand, a popular Lebanese novelist, Amin Maalouf, writing in French, had boldly crashed into this same territory long before and his work had been translated into English as *The Crusades through Arab Eyes* (1983). It is a powerful and passionate work, depicting the Muslim side of the conflict in bold colours. The narrative draws on some medieval Arabic sources, but it is also dramatised and forcefully written to shock the reader. Maalouf asserts in his preface that his book is 'the

true-life novel of the Crusades, of those two centuries of turmoil that shaped the West and the Arab world alike'.

There was also by now a personal dimension to my project. Before the publication of my book on the Crusades, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, I was fortunate enough to make several visits to the Middle East; we spent one family summer in Jerusalem and another in Damascus. It was hard to forget the beauty of the two most sacred Muslim monuments in Jerusalem, the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque, so often mentioned in the medieval Arabic chronicles, and this helped me to understand better the grief of the Muslims when the Crusader invaders took over these buildings. In March 1992 I was in Jerusalem again, having been invited to speak at an international conference held at Bir Zeit University, where I gave a paper which examined the evidence of jihad propaganda on Muslim monumental inscriptions in Syria in the Crusading period. A research trip to Syria, funded by the Royal Society of Edinburgh, was also very memorable. The whole family stayed for the summer in Damascus, the key centre of Muslim power during the Crusades until the death of Saladin in 1193. This visit to Syria involved visiting key sites, such as the Crusader castles, and especially Krak des Chevaliers, and the castles of the Assassins, notably Masyaf.

In addition to this ever-growing personal experience of the Middle East, I was very fortunate, through my reading and teaching, to get to grips with the history of the medieval Islamic world. This impacted on how I wrote my book on the Crusades and indeed on my later articles and book chapters on that subject. As the book took shape, and thanks in part to many discussions with my husband, who is an Islamic art historian, I increasingly came to value the pictorial evidence of art, and material culture in general, in evoking the Muslim world within which the Crusades took place. Edinburgh University Press were extremely generous in the number of pictures and drawings they allowed me to include in my book. Indeed, the rich illustrative material of the book has contributed to its success; it is still in print twenty years after its first publication. As it happened, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* appeared in 1999, the 900th anniversary of the Crusader capture of Jerusalem. This was a fortunate conjunction of dates. But what sadly proved still more relevant, perhaps, were the events of 11 September 2001 (9/11), which gave the distant past of the Crusades an unexpectedly topical relevance and importance

that continue to this day. It is well known that after the devastating attacks on the Twin Towers in New York, President Bush spoke the words 'This is a crusade'. Moreover, it was not long before the world's media broadcast the news that Usama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda, had delivered uncompromisingly hostile speeches about waging jihad against global 'Jews and Crusaders'.

My book on the Crusades marked a turning point in my career, for I have continued to work on aspects of the vast horizons which it opened, filling out in more detail the general picture that I sketched in it. Thus, in several papers included in this volume, I have explored the perennially fascinating personality of Saladin via the insights provided by his contemporary biographers and by his rich posthumous legacy. In other papers I deal with the varied manifestations of jihad in poetry and speeches, and with the fortunes of Saladin's descendants, the Ayyubid dynasty. The field of Crusades studies from Muslim viewpoints has indeed flourished and other scholars have taken up the baton. Anne-Marie Eddé and Jonathan Phillips have recently both written excellent biographies of Saladin. Paul Cobb has published *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades* (2014), an admirable and beautifully written work which covers Spain, North Africa and Sicily as well as the Levant. I should also mention Donald Richards, with his epochal translations of the parts of Ibn al-Athir's *World History* that deal with the Crusading period, and R. Stephen Humphreys, with his much earlier book *From Saladin to the Mongols: The Ayyubids of Damascus, 1193–1260*, which placed Saladin's dynasty within a wider context. In the past decade, younger scholars like Alex Mallett, Niall Christie and Kenneth Goudie have tackled aspects of jihad in Crusader times. And another major task looms ahead for their generation, namely the translation of more key medieval Arabic sources, such as the chronicle of al-'Azimi (recently completed by Alex Mallett), the history of Ibn Wasil (to be undertaken by Taef al-Azhari) and many more thirteenth- to fifteenth-century Mamluk chronicles. So the field of Crusade studies seen from the Muslim side is now clearly vibrant; this was proved in 2016 when, thanks to the generosity of St Andrews University, I was able to organise a conference which was attended by a stellar group of established and promising younger scholars who spoke on the subject of Crusader Syria. I then edited their excellent, wide-ranging papers in a volume entitled *Conflict*

and Co-existence: Syria in Crusader Times, published in 2019 by Edinburgh University Press.

To sum up, when I entered the field of Islamic studies it could fairly have been described as a backwater of the humanities. Similarly, when I began to write about the Crusades as the Muslims saw them, this was a neglected field of Islamic studies. But that is no longer the case. Nor is interest in Crusade history just the preserve of academics and their students. Events over the last fifty years have propelled it to the forefront of public attention. The steady growth of interest in the Muslim world in general, and the Crusades in particular, especially since the shattering events of 9/11, has led to many invitations coming my way to write newspaper articles and to participate in radio and TV programmes on subjects such as jihad, famous battles, the interesting but lesser-known topic of Muslim–Crusader coexistence, and the career of Saladin. For example, Jonathan Riley-Smith and I were interviewed on American television to discuss our views on Ridley Scott's popular film about Saladin, *Kingdom of Heaven*. I must admit that we disagreed, but very amicably, about this film; he did not approve of it and I did. In general, it has been a pleasure, and also an education, to learn how to tailor information so as to reach a non-specialist audience, and here my years of experience as a teacher of undergraduates have stood me in good stead. Most of the invitations I have received have required me to talk about the Crusades. So there is little doubt that the history of the Crusades still interests many people: a fascinating story in its own right, and a parable for our own times.

Looking back on my career after more than half a century, I realise more clearly than ever how richly I have been repaid for the heavy and unremitting labour of learning the three major languages of the central Islamic lands, and Arabic in particular. The medieval Muslim world within which I work is as full of interest as it ever was, with far more areas to be explored than there are scholars to do the work. But in my own lifetime it has begun to capture the headlines, and I am indeed fortunate to have received honours and prizes for my work. As editor now of three separate series at Edinburgh University Press, I count myself lucky to be in constant touch with scholars across the globe who are driven by the desire to explore that perennially fascinating world.

This book is dedicated to Donald Richards,
who introduced me to the Crusades

I

Some Medieval Islamic Approaches to Source Material: The Evidence of a Twelfth-century Chronicle

Ibn al-Azraq al-Fariqi, the author of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*, is no great historian. Even when judged by the unexacting standards set by other twelfth-century chroniclers his work appears inadequate. His chronology, as Cahen has rightly noted,[1] is chaotic and his historical narrative is frequently garbled. Nevertheless, this town chronicler of Mayyafariqin, a centre of Artuqid power in the Jazira, travelled widely and his work contains important material not to be found elsewhere. It is therefore well worth study. This judgement is borne out by the steady use made of his text by later Muslim historians.

Since the chronicle of Ibn al-Azraq is a lengthy one, it seems desirable to confine the discussion of it in this article to the period of the early Artuqids, namely 500/1106–550/1156. This period is especially suitable because it is the one the author knew best. He himself lived through some of its important events and his accounts are based on eyewitness reports or personal reminiscences.

The *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* is known in two manuscripts which are both in the British Library: Or. 5803 and Or. 6310. The closing sections of these manuscripts deal with the Artuqids and are unpublished.[2] In this article the longer manuscript (Or. 5803) will be referred to as Ms. A, and the other as Ms. B.

The *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* appears to have been known to a number of seventh/thirteenth-century Muslim historians in Syria and Egypt, who make extensive borrowings from it in their own works. It is not the intention here to discuss the debt owed to Ibn al-Azraq by all the Muslim

authors who are known to have made use of his work. Attention will be focused on only four historians, but all of these borrowed substantial material from the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid.*

In the case of these authors – Sibt b.al-Jawzi, Ibn Khallikan, Ibn Shaddad and Ibn Wasil – no attempt has yet been made to establish, by means of a critical comparison and analysis, the exact relationship between Ibn alAzraq's original and the later borrowing. In the case of Ibn Wasil, the very fact of his dependence on Ibn al-Azraq has not hitherto been widely recognised.

It therefore seems worthwhile not merely to list the borrowings which can be identified but also to discover why later historians borrowed what they did and to discuss how and why they altered or otherwise tampered with this material. In the process it might be possible to glean some insights into the use which a medieval historian made of his sources.

A note of caution should, however, be sounded at this stage. It is clearly unrealistic to expect from these medieval authors a critical approach to their sources. For them the primary function of a historian was to chronicle events, not to impose a pattern upon them. They rarely display an awareness of the wider historical setting of the events which they set down, or of the implications of those events. They do not habitually sift, select and evaluate their material. Where accounts differ they are often content to place them side by side without comment. Borrowings are very rarely acknowledged. In the context of this approach to writing history it should be no surprise that interpretative comments are the exception, not the rule. Since the historian maintains so determined a neutrality, the only way of detecting his real attitude is by studying his selection of material and, equally important, his omissions. Even this method is fraught with difficulties, for it is quite possible that later historians were constrained to use Ibn al-Azraq because some of the information he provided was not to be found elsewhere.

Although the four authors to be studied in detail in this article have been termed 'historians', the particular emphasis of their work varies. Sibt b. al-Jawzi and Ibn Wasil qualify as genuine historians, as will be clear from the discussion below. Ibn Khallikan, however, was concerned with writing biographies and this naturally led him to ignore much that was of vital political interest. His borrowings from Ibn al-Azraq are dictated by this somewhat narrow interest. Ibn Shaddad was a historical geographer whose approach was

to write a concise history of each of the towns within his area of choice. Thus the same events are often repeated in several places in the text just because they directly concern the town in question. Other events of much greater moment are omitted simply because they happened somewhere else. While each of the four authors under discussion quarried material from Ibn al-Azraq, their aims were not the same. But the very fact that they all used him, despite the differences in their approach, is ample testimony to the regard in which he was held in the century after his death.

Thus the evident lack of any literary merit in Ibn al-Azraq's work and indeed the wealth of grammatical errors and colloquial usages which occur on nearly every page do not apparently deter later writers from extracting significant portions of the text for incorporation into their own histories. The detailed subject matter clearly outweighs considerations of literary or linguistic merit in writers who themselves have lost contact with the literary standards much valued in the 'Abbasid period. As Fück demonstrates, the advent of the Seljuq Turks brought fundamental linguistic as well as political changes.[3] Even Usama b. Munqidh (488/1095–584/1188), who is capable of writing correct classical Arabic in his poetry, used a simpler, more colloquial language in his biographical reminiscences.[4]

Sibt b. al-Jawzi and Ibn al-Azraq

The work of Sibt b. al-Jawzi[5] entitled *Mir'at al-zaman* belongs to the genre of universal history much favoured by Muslim writers. Like his grandfather, Sibt b. al-Jawzi writes biographies of the *'ulama'* but blends these with historical accounts, culled either from other sources or – for the latter part of his work – from his own experience.

Cahen rightly comments on the derivative nature of the *Mir'at al-zaman* in the sections which deal with the sixth/twelfth century.[6] Here, Sibt b. al-Jawzi draws heavily on the works of Ibn al-Qalanisi and Ibn al-Azraq and on the *History of the Atabegs of Mosul*[7] by Ibn al-Athir.

On the other hand, Gabrieli laments the fact that Sibt b. al-Jawzi has not been studied systematically, since his work is of primary value for the Ayyubid and Mamluk period.[8] Whatever the merits of his history for the seventh/thirteenth century, the very fact that the *Mir'at al-zaman* copies other works so extensively for the period under discussion in this article is of value.

In the *Mir'at al-zaman*, Sibt b. al-Jawzi quotes several passages which appear to have been taken from Ibn al-Azraq. In the particular section of his history which deals with events between 500/1106–7 and 550/1155–6, Sibt b. al-Jawzi does not, it is true, explicitly acknowledge that he has borrowed information from Ibn al-Azraq. Earlier, however, under the year 418 AH (1027–8), he says that his source for the details of the placing of a purse in the coffin of the vizier al-Maghribi[9] is the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*, a fact noted by Amedroz.[10]

Amedroz also draws attention to a statement by Sibt b. al-Jawzi to the effect that he used the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* as his source for his information that the vizier al-Maghribi wanted to be buried beneath the feet of al-Husayn.[11] Such details are, however, not to be found in either Ms. A or Ms. B of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*. Similarly, the account given by Sibt b. al-Jawzi of the defeat of Qilij Arslan in 500/1106–7[12] is very different from the version of this event given in 'Awad's edition which is based on Mss. A and B.[13] Yet here again Sibt b. al-Jawzi expressly states that his source is the author of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*.[14] It would therefore appear likely that the manuscripts of Ibn al-Azraq's work used for this discussion were not the only ones known in the medieval period. This suggests that Sibt b. al-Jawzi used a third version of Ibn al-Azraq's text for the portions of his work mentioned above.

For the part of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* which is discussed in this article, Sibt b. al-Jawzi borrows small, isolated details taken from the period 500/1106–7 to 550/1155–6. More significant than these somewhat trivial borrowings, however, are several extended episodes in his narrative which trace their origin back to the work of Ibn al-Azraq. The first example of this kind is the account by Sibt b. al-Jawzi of İl-Ghazi's campaign to Tiflis.[15] His version of this episode is an interesting mixture of summary, paraphrase and copying from the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa Amid*.[16] His text runs as follows:

كان قوم من اهل تفليس يقال لهم بنو جعفر قد ملكوها فأقاموا ماتي سنة ثم
انقرض كبارهم وبقي شبابهم كل و احد منهم شهرا فاقاموا على ذلك اربعين سنة
وكان داؤد ملك الابخاز و الكرج قد ضايقها مضايقة شديدة فأرسلوا الى طغرل
بن محمد شاه وهو صاحب أران فبعث اليهم شحنته فما نفع فكتبوا الى نجم الدين

وملوك الاطراف شمس الدولة طغان صاحب ارزن وبدليس و السلطان طغريل
وغيرهم وكان الموعد باب تفليس فنزل على اقل من نصق يوم ولم يكن وصل من
عساكر الاطر اف احد فتحدر الملك داؤد من الجبل في عساكر عظيمة فهزمهم
وغنم امو الهم و اخذ شيئا عظيما وهرب نجم الدين ودبيس.

In both versions of the text in Ibn al-Azraq, on which this passage is based, Ibn al-Azraq uses the verb نفذ three times. A close reading of his work lends credence to the theory that for him this verb has a meaning close to 'send' or 'contact'.[17] His vocabulary is extremely limited in general, but he particularly over-uses this verb, which can be found throughout his work.

Sibt b. al-Jawzi clearly finds the verb نفذ used in this way either incorrect, obscure or provincial, for he removes it completely from his version of this episode. Elsewhere he is not averse to borrowing from Ibn al-Azraq certain phrases which please him – the words انقرض كبارهم (Ms. A) and كان . . . قدضايقها مضايقة شد يدة (Mss. A and B) are lifted intact into his own work[18] – but in this section he replaces the verb نفذ by three separate verbs. He changes نفذوا to ارسلوا[19] on the first occasion. When it appears again, he replaces نفذ by بعث.[20] The third time he writes the verb كتبوا[21] instead of نفذوا.

The changes which Sibt b. al-Jawzi makes to Ibn al-Azraq's text confirm the meaning of نفذ as 'send' or 'contact'. Moreover, they reveal the impoverishment and repetitiveness of Ibn al-Azraq's language. Whilst the style of Sibt b. al-Jawzi is not especially graceful or well turned, it is the work of a writer who is better acquainted with Arabic and who is more lucid and subtle than Ibn al-Azraq.

Like Ibn al-Azraq, Sibt b. al-Jawzi recognises the need to explain who the protagonists are in this unfamiliar historical episode. But he makes additions, omissions and summaries as he feels appropriate to the information about Tughril and Toghan Arslan which he derives from Ibn al-Azraq. Sibt b. al-Jawzi presumably realises that his readers would know nothing of these minor rulers, so adds that they are border-lords (*muluk al-atraf*).[22] He also eliminates the details of the route taken by İl-Ghazi into Georgia, probably realising that it would be only of peripheral interest to his readers. Moreover, he replaces Ibn al-Azraq's account of the troop movements of Tughril and

Toghan Arslan by the succinct phrase «و كان الموعد باب تفليس» 'the rendezvous was outside Tiflis'. Although his account is appreciably shorter than that of Ibn al-Azraq, it has the virtue of clarity.

The second extended account which Sibt b. al-Jawzi borrows from Ibn al-Azraq is that concerned with the capture of Titus by King David the Restorer and his subsequent treatment of its inhabitants.[23]

The text is as follows:

ثم نازل داؤد تفليس و فتحها بالسيف عنوة و احرقها ونهبها ثم طيب قلوب اهلها وسألوه اشياء فابقاها عليهم وهي جارية الى هلم جرا، منها انه لا يذبح فيها خنزير و ان يضرب على الدر اهم و الدنانير اسم الله ورسوله و الخليفة و ان تقام الجماعات بالاذ ان و الخطبة يوم الجمعة و ان لا يدخل الحمام مع المسلمين و ان لا يؤ ذى كافر مسلما. فاليوم لهم جميع ذلك و كان داؤد يدخل كل يوم جمعة الجامع ومعه ولده ديمطرى ويسمع الخطبة و القر اءة ويعطي الخطيب و المؤذنين الذهب الكثير و عمر الرباطات للضيوف و المنازل للوعاظ و الصوفية و الشعر اء واقام لهم الضيافات و كان اذا اراد الانفصال عن تفليس اجازهم وزودهم بالمال الكثير و كان يحترم المسلمين اكثر مما يحترمهم ملوك الاسلام.

This account by Sibt b. al-Jawzi is not different in substance from the text of Ibn al-Azraq in either manuscript. The phraseology of Mss. A and B, however, has been drastically changed by Sibt b. al-Jawzi, unless indeed his words are based on a version of Ibn al-Azraq's text which is now lost. But in view of the fundamental similarity in style between Mss. A and B, it is not very likely that any other version of Ibn al-Azraq's work would have been couched in the terms used by Sibt b. al-Jawzi. Rather, the style of any missing manuscript would resemble closely that of Mss. A or B. Internal stylistic evidence in the passage above rules out the possibility that Ibn al-Azraq would use such phrases as و هي جارية الى هلم جرا. The wording here is far more likely to be that of Sibt b. al-Jawzi himself, who has taken the liberty of eliminating some of the more difficult parts of Ibn al-Azraq's narrative and using his own phraseology for that which remains. Thus he removes such technical fiscal terms as *athqal*, *aqsat* and the specific reference to the bath of Ismail at Tiflis. On the question of King David's treatment of the religious elite in the city, Sibt b. al-Jawzi seems to have had additional information, either from a missing

copy of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* or from another source. He adds poets to the list of people helped by King David and mentions the detail that if the preachers, Sufis and poets wanted to leave Tiflis the King allowed them to do so and supplied them with a lot of money.

Sibt b. al-Jawzi also takes liberties in his interpretation of parts of this passage. Ibn al-Azraq's phrase جعل لاهل الدين و الصوفية اكرم المنازل is taken literally by Sibt b. al-Jawzi. He writes: 'He built *ribat*s for guests and houses for preachers and Sufis and poets.' Ibn al-Azraq's wording is certainly more susceptible to a metaphorical interpretation, indicating probably that the king accorded the *'ulama'* and Sufis the highest status.

The third episode borrowed from Ibn al-Azraq in the *Mir'at al-zaman*[24] is the account of the earthquake at Ganja.[25] This passage is modelled more closely on Ibn al-Azraq and retains much of his actual wording in Ms. A:

> و فيها زلزلت جنزة وقيل كنجة و انخسف طرف منها و انهدم سورها فسار اليها
> ملك الابخاز و الكرج فسار اليها بعساكره فدخلها و ساق اهلها سبايا الى تفليس
> بحيث حملوا على العجل وسيق المسلمون مثل قطعات الغنم فاشترى اهل تفليس
> منها خلقا كثيرا و اعتقوهم فكان اهل تفليس يقولون ما افتقرنا غير تلك السنة.

Sibt b. Jawzi's version of this passage is of value in elucidating some of the problems of vocabulary presented by Ibn al-Azraq's text and indeed in solving some of the cruces of that text. Ibn al-Azraq writes دخلت الاسارى الى تفليس على العجل which can be interpreted either as 'the prisoners entered Tiflis on carts' or 'the prisoners entered Tiflis in a hurry'. By replacing دخلت by حملوا Sibt b. al-Jawzi makes it clear that he at least interpreted the phrase as involving some form of transport. Furthermore, the statement made by the people of Tiflis presents difficulties of decipherment in Ms. A. A tentative reading of افتقرنا (f. 162b) is supported by Sibt b. al-Jawzi's use of افقرنا.

More important than the linguistic issues raised by a comparison of individual details in the accounts of these three episodes[26] in the texts of Ibn al-Azraq and Sibt b. al-Jawzi are the broader questions of the choice of material and the emphasis used.

Sibt b. al-Jawzi is writing a general history. He is not viewing events from the specifically local vantage point of Ibn al-Azraq. Places and people that are familiar to Ibn al-Azraq's readers in the area of Mayyafariqin are not

necessarily known to Sibt b. al-Jawzi and his readership in Damascus. In his search for relevant material in Ibn al-Azraq, Sibt b. al-Jawzi must have had to skim through a great deal of text which held no interest for him. Particular value therefore attaches to the sections he did decide to reproduce in his own history. In fact his selection of material from Ibn al-Azraq proves to be sensible, indeed intelligent. He chooses three episodes, all connected with Georgia. Not only are they concerned with events and places with which Ibn al-Azraq was familiar personally, but they are also one major section of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* which contains unusual, even original, information not available in other Arabic chronicles accessible to Sibt b. al-Jawzi in the sixth/thirteenth century. For Syrian matters, Sibt b. al-Jawzi rightly concentrates on the work of Ibn al-Qalanisi who handles this material with a firmer grasp and good chronology. Ibn al-Azraq's account of the ill-fated campaign into Georgia is much more convincing than the one given in Ibn al-Qalanisi, whilst his description of King David's treatment of the Muslims must have interested Sibt b. al-Jawzi, who gives it extended treatment in an account which is otherwise terse narrative.

Other motives may have prompted Sibt b. al-Jawzi to concentrate on this Caucasian material. Conflict on their Georgian frontiers was a matter of urgent concern for the later Seljuq rulers. The Seljuq Tughril of Arran was involved in this one unsuccessful attempt to repel the Georgians in 515/1121–2 and Sultan Mahmud personally went out on campaign into Georgian territory soon afterwards in 517/1123–4.[27] Sibt b. al-Jawzi is closely interested in the events of late Seljuq history. Just as he can manifest a certain malicious satisfaction at the degrading fate of Sultan Sanjar, seeing it as God's retribution for the humiliation and death suffered by the caliph, al-Mustarshid,[28] so too this historian's horizons can extend to include material on the Caucasus connected with the decline of Seljuq power.

One important question remains: which version of Ibn al-Azraq's text was used by Sibt b. al-Jawzi? The work was probably well known in Syria since the writers who copied him in the century after his death (some time in the 570s AH/1174–84) lived in that area. On the basis of the three long extracts discussed above, it is clear that Sibt b. al-Jawzi did not copy from Ms. B.[29]

There is a great similarity between the accounts in Ms. A and Sibt b. al-Jawzi, but the latter also contains details which are not in Ms. A. As the

rest of the Caucasian material in Sibt b. al-Jawzi comes from Ibn al-Azraq's account, which is based on his first-hand experience in Georgia and eyewitness accounts, there is no pressing reason why it may not be assumed that the additional sentences found in the *Mir'at al-zaman* also originate from the same source. It may therefore be concluded that Sibt b. al-Jawzi used a version of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* which is now lost but which resembled Ms. A more closely than Ms. B. An alternative but less likely hypothesis is that he used Ms. A and a missing version of the text of Ibn al-Azraq together.

Whatever version of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* was used in the *Mir'at al-zaman*, Sibt b. al-Jawzi selects material from Ibn al-Azraq which deals specifically with the Caucasus. In his treatment of the material, however, although he may change the actual wording, he does not in general alter the emphasis or attempt to give his own interpretation of the events.[30]

Ibn Khallikan and Ibn al-Azraq

The great biographical work *Wafayat al-a'yan wa-anba' abna' al-zaman*,[31], written by Ibn Khallikan (608/1211–12 – 681/1282–3), covers a wide geographical area in its selection of great men, from Spain to Transoxiana. The author, therefore, needs a variety of sources to provide detailed information on the celebrities of so many regions.[32] For the lives of famous people from the Jazira, Ibn Khallikan derives much information from the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*.

It is of no special value to list the numerous occasions when Ibn Khallikan borrows information from Ibn al-Azraq. The actual use Ibn Khallikan makes of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* is in any case probably more extensive than the obvious borrowings cited by Amedroz[33] and 'Awad.[34] Since Ibn Khallikan does not employ a chronological approach for his vast undertaking and since he has a tendency to paraphrase rather than to quote his sources verbatim, it is difficult to trace all the details in his work which have Ibn al-Azraq as their source.

In the discussion which follows, a distinction will be drawn between trivial borrowings and the more extended episodes which Ibn Khallikan has taken from Ibn al-Azraq. Given the clear discrepancy between the literary merits of these two writers, it is not surprising that Ibn Khallikan, having extracted the subject-matter he needs from Ibn al-Azraq, should rephrase the

information, rarely leaving the words of his source unchanged. Although Ibn Khallikans literary style cannot be compared with that of such historians as Ibn al-Tiqtaqa[35] and Miskawayh – he was admired more for the enormous wealth of his subject-matter – his style is manifestly superior to that of Ibn al-Azraq.

We may begin with an example of Ibn Khallikan's borrowing of a small detailed area of information from Ibn al-Azraq: his account of the death of Dubays b. Sadaqa.[36] Ibn Khallikan describes how after the murder of al-Mustarshid, Sultan Mas'ud was afraid of incurring widespread public disapproval for this deed. He therefore decided to fob off the blame onto Dubays. Having analysed the sultan's motives, Ibn Khallikan relates that Dubays came in to pay his respects to the sultan, who made a sign to one of his *mamluk*s. The latter crept up behind Dubays and beheaded him with a sword. After the death of Dubays, Mas'ud published it abroad that Dubays had been killed as an act of vengeance for the murder of al-Mustarshid which Dubays had instigated.

All this information does not come from Ibn al-Azraq who makes only a passing reference to the motive for Dubays' murder[37] and in no way describes the mode of execution. However, for the less important account of Dubays' subsequent burial in Mayyafariqin in the *mashhad* beside Najm al-Din İl-Ghazi, Ibn Khallikan quotes straight from the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*:[38]

> وذكر ابن الازرق في تاريخه أن قتله كان على باب تبريز و انه لما قتل حمل
> الى ماردين الى زوجته كهار خاتون فدفن بالمشهد عند نجم الدين الغازى صاحب
> ماردين و الد كهار خاتون المذكورة ثم تزوج السلطان المذكور ابنة دبيس المذكور
> و أمها شرف خاتون أبنة عميد الدولة بن فخر الدولة محمد بن جهير و أم شرف
> خاتون المذكورة زبيدة بنت الوزير نظام الملك.[39]

It is natural that for specific details concerned with Mayyafariqin, Ibn Khallikan should have recourse to the local historian, Ibn al-Azraq. Thus in one part of his work he gleans information from Ibn al-Azraq on libraries at Mayyafariqin and Amid.[40] Conversely, when Ibn al-Azraq describes the burial of İl-Ghazi in 516/1122, it is Ibn Khallikan who provides an explanation for the buildings mentioned. Ibn al-Azraq writes: 'He (İl-Ghazi) was

buried in the *sidilli*[41] (سدلى) for a while. Then he was removed and buried in the *masjid al-amir* to the east of the *qubbat al-sultan*.'[42]

In his biography of Nasr al-Dawla b. Marwan al-Kurdi (d. 453/1061/2), Ibn Khallikan writes that this Marwanid ruler 'was buried at the mosque of al-Muhdatha or at the castle of al-Sidilli whence his body was, afterwards removed to the vault of the Banu Marwan adjoining the mosque of al-Muhdatha'. He adds that al-Muhdatha is a *ribat* outside the city of Mayyafariqin and that al-Sidilli is the name of a dome situated in the castle and built on three pillars.[43] Ibn al-Azraq feels no need to explain these facts, as in an earlier part of his text he describes these buildings in some detail. Ibn Khallikan must derive his information from there.

A more significant debt which Ibn Khallikan owes to Ibn al-Azraq is revealed in three extended episodes to which Ibn Khallikan accords some prominence and which are all derived from the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid.* An analysis of these passages is valuable both for the elucidation of difficult areas of Ibn al-Azraq's text and also as an illustration of the methods employed by Ibn Khallikan in treating material from this source. It is of some interest that whilst for trivial borrowings Ibn Khallikan acknowledges his debt to Ibn al-Azraq, in the following extracts – where he has borrowed substantially more – he remains silent.

In his biography of Sultan Mas'ud, Ibn Khallikan borrows the following passage from Ibn al-Azraq without acknowledgement:[44]

> وكان السلطان عاد لا طيب الجانب كبير النفس فرق مملكته على اصحابه و لم يكن له من السلطنة غير الاسم وكان مع لين جانبه ما ناو اه أحد الا وظفر به وقتل من الامر اء الاكابر خلقا كثيرا و من جملة من قتل الخليفتان المسترشد بالله والراشد.[45]

Apart from the removal of the conjunction بحيث ان which is over-used by Ibn al-Azraq, Ibn Khallikan takes this passage from و كان to لين جانبه verbatim from Ibn al-Azraq. For the remaining lines quoted above, instead of the long list of amirs cited by Ibn al-Azraq as having been killed by Mas'ud, Ibn Khallikan says simply that 'he killed a good number of the great amirs'. Ibn Khallikan probably considers that the individual names of such amirs are either insignificant or that Ibn al-Azraq's information may be inaccurate.

The fact that Mas'ud was responsible for the murders of the caliphs al-Mustarshid and al-Rashid is, however, deemed worthy of explicit emphasis by Ibn Khallikan. Thus by judicious selection Ibn Khallikan manages to highlight the crucial information. Ibn al-Azraq, by contrast, fails to do so and indeed contradicts himself.

The next part of the biography of Sultan Mas'ud given in the *Wafayat al-a'yan* is also culled from Ibn al-Azraq but from another part of his history where he describes the relationship between Mas'ud and the caliph al-Mustarshid. This extract is again borrowed without acknowledgement by Ibn Khallikan, who writes:

كان قد وقع بينه وبين الخليفة المسترشد و حشة قبل استقلاله في السلطنة فلما
استقل استطال نو ابه على العر اق و عارضو االخليفة في أملاكه.[46]

The sentence استطال نوابه على العراق و عارضوا الخليفة فى املاكه is quoted verbatim from the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* whilst the remainder of the above passage is a paraphrase of Ibn al-Azraq.

In this episode, Ibn Khallikan collects relevant information about Sultan Mas'ud from various parts of Ibn al-Azraq's work, strips it of extraneous detail and incorporates it into his own text. If Ibn al-Azraq's wording meets with his approval (and this occurs only rarely) it remains unchanged. But Ibn Khallikan habitually uses his own words. It casts an interesting sidelight on Ibn al-Azraq as a historian that the information which he gives is most tellingly presented by someone else. It seems that Ibn al-Azraq did not regard himself as having a duty to assemble his material coherently.

In the particular case of the deaths of the caliphs al-Mustarshid and al-Rashid, he states in one part of his text that the Isma'ilis were responsible and elsewhere that Sultan Mas'ud was responsible. He does not adjudicate between these two accounts and may even have failed to notice that they contradict each other. Thus, his chronological approach has left inconsistencies which Ibn Khallikan, applying a more critical and selective eye to the material, has been able to iron out.

A second interesting narrative which originates in Ibn al-Azraq is to be found in Ibn Khallikan's biography of Kamal al-Din al-Shahrazuri.[47] It runs as follows:

ولما قتل عماد الدين على قلعة جعبر كما ذكرناه في ترجمته كان كمال الدين المذكور حاضرا في العسكر هو و أ خوه تاج الدين أبو طاهر يحيى و الد القاضي ضياء الدين فلما رجع العسكر الى الموصل كانا في صحبته ولما تولى سيف الدين غازى ولد عماد الدين فوض الامور كلها الى القاضي كمال الدين و أ خيه بالموصل و جميع مملكته ثم انه قبض عليهما في سنة اثنتين و اربعين و اعتقلهما بقلعة الموصل و أحضر نجم الدين ابا علي الحسن بن بهاء الدين أبي الحسن علي وهو ابن عم كمال الدين وكان قاضي الرحبة وولاه القضاء بالموصل وديار ربيعة عوضا عن كمال الدين ثم ان الخليفة المقتفي سير رسولا وشفع في كمال الدين و أخيه و أخرجا من الاعتقال وقعدا في بيوتهما وعليهما الترسيم وحبس بالقلعة جلال الدين أبو أحمد ولد كمال الدين و ضياء الدين ابو الفضائل القاسم بن تاج الدين ولما مات سيف الدين غازى في التاريخ المذكور في ترجمته رفع الترسيم عنهما وحضرا الى قطب الدين مودود بن زنكي وقد تولى السلطنة بعد أخيه سيف الدين وكان راكبا في ميد ان الموصل فلما قربا منه ترجلا و عليهما ثياب العزاء بغير طرحات فلما وصلا اليه ترجل لهما أيضا وعزياه عن أخيه وهنآه بالولاية ثم ركبوا ووقف كل و احد منهما الى جانبه ثم عادا الى بيوتهما بغير ترسيم وصارا يركبان في الخدمة.

In the first part of this passage Ibn Khallikan states that Kamal al-Din al-Shahrazuri and his brother Taj al-Din were with the *'askar* of Mosul at the time of Zengi's assassination and that Sayf al-Din b. Zengi handed over all affairs to the two of them after his establishment in Mosul. Ibn Khallikan is here summarising a long narrative from Ibn al-Azraq.[48] Ibn Khallikan covers some of the same material under his biography of Sayf al-Din Ghazi. From the intervention of the caliph al-Muqtafi who sends messengers to try to intercede on behalf of the two brothers who have been imprisoned, this section of Ibn Khallikan's text is modelled more closely on Ibn al-Azraq.[49] The details of the meeting between Qutb al-Din Mawdud and the two brothers in the *maidan* at Mosul are taken from the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*. Whole phrases, such as عزياه عن اخيه and بغير طرحات, have been left unchanged. For the rest, the main lines of the narrative of Ibn al-Azraq are followed in sequence but the wording used by Ibn Khallikan is his own. The obscure نفذ ..... جماعة ... رسلا gives way to the simpler سيره رسلا . The ubiquitous حصلوا in the text of Ibn al-Azraq is replaced by صاروا.

Ibn Khallikan uses the words الاعتقال and الترسيم which do not appear to have formed part of Ibn al-Azraq's stock vocabulary. The confusion created by Ibn al-Azraq over the names in this passage is removed by Ibn Khallikan.[50]

In his treatment of the story of the two brothers al-Shahrazuri, Ibn Khallikan gives his narrative greater clarity and unity. Ibn al-Azraq records that the initial imprisonment of these men took place in 542/1147–8 and that they remained under house arrest until the death of Sayf al-Din Ghazi in 544/1149–50. In Ibn al-Azraq's account, however, the various parts of the story are interrupted, as the author, true to the chronological framework of his work, breaks off to discuss other events which have no bearing on the imprisonment of Kamal al-Din and Taj al-Din. Two folios later, their story is resumed. Ibn Khallikan is not bound by the same restrictions of genre and again groups together all relevant parts of the narrative.

A third account which Ibn Khallikan borrows from Ibn al-Azraq is the description of the events which immediately followed the death of Zengi. Ibn Khallikan uses this material from Ibn al-Azraq[51] in his biography of Sayf al-Din Ghazi, son of Zengi.[52] Some of the details of Zengi's assassination according to the version of Ibn al-Azraq[53] are given elsewhere in the *Wafayat al-a'yan,* in the biography of Zengi.[54] But this is a very abbreviated treatment by Ibn Khallikan, who shows much greater interest in the power struggle which ensued on Zengi's. death. His account reads as follows:

اجتمع أكابر الدولة وفيهم الوزير جمال الدين محمد الاصبهاني المعروف بالجو
اد و القاضي كمال الدين ابو الفضل محمد الشهرزوری وسيأتي ذكرهما ان شاء الله
تعالى وقصدوا خيمة الب ار سلان المذكور وقالوا له كان عماد الدين زنكي غلامك
ونحن غلمانك و البلاد لك وصمتوا الناس بهذا الكلام ثم ان العسكر افترق فر قتين
فطائفة منهم توجهت صحبة نور الدين محمود ابن عماد الدين زنكي الآتي ذكره
ان شاء الله تعالى الى الشام و الطائفة الثانية سارت مع الب ارسلان و عساكر
الموصل وديار ربيعة الى الموصل فلما انتهوا الى سنجار تخيل الب ارسلان منهم
الغدر فتركهم وهرب فلحقه بعض العسكر وردوه فلما وصلوا الى الموصل وصلهم
سيف الدين غازى المذكور وكان مقيما بشهرزور لانها كانت اقطاعه من جهة
السلطان مسعود السلجوقي الآتي ذكره ان شاء الله تعالى فلما استقر بالموصل قبض

على الب ارسلان المذكور وسيره الى بعض القلاع وملك الموصل وما كان لابيه من ديار ربيعة وترتبت احواله.

From the beginning of this extract until the mention of Kamal al-Din al-Shahrazuri, Ibn Khallikan is summarising the disturbed events which ensued after the death of Zengi outside Qal'at Ja'bar in 541/1146–7. Neither he nor Ibn al-Azraq explain that the events they then describe are part of a plan conceived by Kamal al-Din and his associates to take the young Seljuq *malik* back to Mosul only as a stalling measure until Sayf al-Din Ghazi can reach Mosul and assume power.

The conversation between Zengi's officials and Alp Arslan closely echoes the one recorded by Ibn al-Azraq. Similarly, the information about the two groups which were formed, the one heading for Syria and the other for Mosul, comes from the same source, although the wording is somewhat different. But then Ibn Khallikan adds a statement of his own to the effect that the reason why the *malik* fled after his arrival in Mosul was that he imagined himself to be the object of some treacherous plot.

Thus Ibn Khallikan rounds off the bald narrative of events by an interpretative comment, whereas Ibn al-Azraq is here content simply to record what happened without looking for the motivation of the protagonists. The rest of Ibn Khallikan's account follows closely that of Ibn al-Azraq, whose words are paraphrased.

It will be clear from the discussion so far that Ibn Khallikan utilises only that information from Ibn al-Azraq which is relevant to the biographies he writes. The material he borrows is usually in the form of anecdotes about the famous person under discussion. The extracts analysed above are concerned with the Zengids, about whom Ibn al-Azraq possessed much first-hand information culled from eyewitnesses or from his own experience.

Ibn Khallikan clearly recognised the value of the probably original material contained in the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*. It is significant, and indicative of Ibn Khallikan's selective technique, that he leaves unused Ibn al-Azraq's garbled account of Ibn Tumart and 'Abd al-Mu'min in which certain sections are obscure and the chronology wildly inaccurate, although he himself writes an extended biography of Ibn Tumart.

Stylistically, Ibn Khallikan displays the same sensitivity. He does not

automatically reproduce the Arabic of his model. Instead, he prefers to paraphrase or summarise Ibn al-Azraq's text, only occasionally leaving unchanged phrases from the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*. Perhaps Ibn Khallikan was actuated by a desire to stamp his book with his own personal style. Alternatively, the Arabic style of Ibn al-Azraq was too unpleasing for him to reproduce – though he himself is not the greatest of stylists. Whatever his motive, he is the only one of the four authors discussed in this article who can be critical of the matter as well as the wording of Ibn al-Azraq's work.

In short, then, Ibn Khallikan shows good judgement in his choice of large-scale borrowings from Ibn al-Azraq, on whose work he also draws for a wealth of minor topographical details concerned with the Jazira.

It is extremely difficult to assess which version of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* is used by Ibn Khallikan. Most of the details he chooses to incorporate in his work appear to come from Ms. A rather than Ms. B, but he may well have had access to a version of Ibn al-Azraq's text now lost. Since he so often changes the wording of Ibn al-Azraq, it is rarely possible to employ stylistic criteria to judge which manuscript of the text Ibn Khallikan used. But the cumulative evidence provided by Ibn Khallikan, Sibt b. al-Jawzi and Ibn Wasil does point to their use of a now lost text which approximates fairly closely to Ms. A.

Ibn Shaddad and Ibn al-Azraq

It is well known that the author of the historical geography entitled *al-A'laq al-khatira fi dhikr umara' al-Sham wa'l-Jazira*[55] makes extensive use of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* in the part of his work which deals with the Jazira. Amedroz drew attention to this fact[56] and also identified the author as Ibn Shaddad of Aleppo (613/1216–7 – 684/1285–6).[57] The work was probably written between 671/1272–3 and 680/1281–2. More recently, Cahen analysed the geographical information on the Jazira provided by Ibn Shaddad and discussed briefly the sources used by this author.[58]

Cahen states that in the part of Ibn Shaddad's work which is found in Ms. Marsh 333 some geographical data and almost all the historical facts concerned with events before 622/1231–2 are made up of quotations from other authors.[59] For the period under discussion in this article, Ibn Shaddad's sources are Ibn al-Azraq and Ibn al-Athir.

Whilst Cahen is generally accurate as to the extent of the debt owed to Ibn al-Azraq by Ibn Shaddad, it would not be correct to say that the quotations from Ibn al-Azraq in Marsh 333 are an exact replica of his wording. These sections of Ibn Shaddad's text do therefore have some linguistic interest. In any case, the very selection of information by Ibn Shaddad, and even his omissions, quite apart from his changes of Ibn al Azraq's wording, may be of some historical value. Ibn Shaddad only mentions the name of Ibn al-Azraq twice[60] but there is convincing evidence that he borrows from this author throughout Marsh 333.

Ibn Shaddad's aim is to write a historical geography. He begins his description of the Jazira by dividing the area into three parts, Diyar Rabiʿa, Diyar Mudar and Diyar Bakr. For each of these three regions he lists the principal towns. When he deals with an individual town, he provides certain relevant geographical and topographical information about it. Thereafter he gives a summary of the history of the town according to the information available to him, which varies considerably from one town to the next.

The inevitable drawback of this method of writing is the continual repetition of basic historical facts.[61] In a sense this is inevitable, especially as in the area under discussion neighbouring towns were often under the same ruler or at least had their fortunes closely linked. On the other hand, the presentation of dynastic history in Ibn al-Azraq is given a new focus if viewed, according to Ibn Shaddad's method, from the successive vantage points of individual cities other than Mayyafariqin. Generally, however, Ibn Shaddad's approach is cumbersome.

When Ibn Shaddad borrows from Ibn al-Azraq, his phraseology adheres more closely to that of his source than does the wording of Ibn Wasil, Sibt b. al-Jawzi or Ibn Khallikan. When the wording in both texts is identical, Marsh 333 is of great help as a third version of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*, to supplement Mss. A and B and to clarify obscure parts of the text, especially difficult place names. On some occasions, moreover, when Ibn Shaddad slightly changes the language of his source, he gives an indication of what the meaning of a particular word or phrase might be.

The major passages which Ibn Shaddad has taken from Ibn al-Azraq's work in the period *c.* 500/*c.* 1106–*c.* 550/–*c.* 1156 are the accounts of the

reigns of İl-Ghazi and Temürtash in Mayyafariqin.[62] The treatment of these passages in Ibn Shaddad's work is unusually long. No doubt he profits from the detailed historical descriptions given by Ibn al-Azraq for the town of Mayyafariqin whilst the dearth of information available to him about other places in Diyar Bakr restricts him to brief historical resumes or a bare list of the names of the people who ruled there.[63] Where Ibn Shaddad's sources expatiate on the subject in hand, he himself does likewise. For example, Ibn al-Athir's description of Yaquti's seizure of Mardin is reproduced at length in Marsh 333.

No special inference, therefore, may be drawn from the extended treatment given by Ibn Shaddad to the activities of İl-Ghazi and Temürtash at Mayyafariqin. He employs no rigorously selective technique and omits very little from his source. For his accounts of this Artuqid material he follows closely the version of Ibn al-Azraq's text found in Ms. B. The order and nature of the information given by Ibn Shaddad exactly mirrors that in Ms. B and the form of wording used is very similar. Ibn Shaddad's dependence on Ms. B is apparent in his account of the reigns of both İl-Ghazi and Temürtash. He adds very few comments of his own and there appear to be no details which come from Ms. A or from another version of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*. In this respect the text of Ibn Shaddad differs from that of Sibt b. al-Jawzi.

For the information about İl-Ghazi which he finds in Ms. B, Ibn Shaddad keeps the facts he gives, and their interpretation, exactly as he finds them. Some rudimentary process of selection is adopted. He eliminates the reference to the burning of the Friday mosque at Amid in 513/1119–20, which is in Ms. B,[64] and moves straight from Balat to the acquisition of Nasibin by İl-Ghazi in 514/1120–1.[65] While it is understandable that in an account of Mayyafariqin he should omit a reference to a mosque in Amid, it is also not entirely relevant that he should then deal with İl-Ghazi's activities at Balat and Nasibin. Moreover, he soon strays even further from Mayyafariqin. The first part of the account of İl-Ghazi's campaign to Tiflis in 515/1121–2 which is given in Ms. B[66] is repeated by Ibn Shaddad,[67] but after his account of İl-Ghazi's defeat he omits any reference to King David's treatment of the inhabitants of Tiflis or to the earthquake at Ganja, describing only İl-Ghazi's humiliating return to Mardin and subsequent death.[68] The omission by Ibn

Shaddad of material so patently unconnected with Diyar Bakr is understandable but he lacks consistency since he still mentions in some detail İl-Ghazi's campaign to Tiflis. His somewhat blinkered use of his source has led him to incorporate some of its rather different emphases into his own work. As a result, his section on Mayyafariqin is abnormally long and too frequently strays from its ostensible subject.

A more sensible policy has been adopted by Ibn Shaddad for his treatment of the reign of Temürtash.[69] Once again, the order in which he gives his information is exactly that of the parallel information given by Ibn al-Azraq in Ms. B,[70] but material irrelevant to the history of Diyar Bakr has now been removed. Thus, Ibn Shaddad relates the taking of Mayyafariqin by Temürtash in 518/1124–5,[71] the death of Sayyida Khatun, daughter of Qilij Arslan of Malatya, in 524/1129–30,[72] the arrival of certain officials in Mayyafariqin in 528/1133–4[73] and the important struggle in the area between Zengi, Temürtash and Da'ud of Hisn Kayfa in the years 520/1126–541/1147. Ibn Shaddad mentions the killing of Habashi in Zengi's camp in 538/1143–4,[74] the death of Da'ud in 539/1144–5[75] and that of Temürtash in 548/1153–4.[76] His narrative ends with an account of the officials who held office at Mayyafariqin.[77]

It is significant that material on the Maghrib, Baghdad, Syria, and on the important struggle between the caliph al-Mustarshid and Sultan Mas'ud, all of which is interpolated in almost random fashion by Ibn al-Azraq in his mainly local chronicle, has been omitted by Ibn Shaddad. It is difficult to understand, however, why Ibn Shaddad should be more alert to the discontinuities of his source for the period 516/1122–548/1154 than for the equally obvious discontinuities in the period *c.* 500/1106–516/1122. Perhaps he was becoming aware of the inordinate length of his entry on Mayyafariqin and felt the need to abbreviate it. In any case, Ibn al-Azraq himself provides such a wealth of information on Temürtash that some cutting by Ibn Shaddad was obviously imperative. By contrast, Ibn al-Azraq's account of İl-Ghazi is much sparser and this dearth of information may have prompted Ibn Shaddad even to incorporate material which did not properly belong with the local history of Mayyafariqin.

In general, it may be concluded that his selection of material, especially that which deals with the reign of Temürtash, is imposed on him by the

geographical limitations of his work and not by any more subtle motives such as a desire to interpret his source or to suppress unsuitable information.

For the specifically local material which he finds in Ms. B of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*, Ibn Shaddad restricts his choice of information still further. Here he again shows good sense. He concentrates on those events specifically connected with the history of the Artuqids. Thus he reveals a certain ability to sift the available information and to highlight the significant items. Even the accounts about the Artuqids which Ibn Shaddad does choose to include in his own work are often much shortened from their original form in Ibn al-Azraq, as for example his brief reference to the death of Temürtash, an event which inspires Ibn al-Azraq to launch into a lengthy panegyric of his former master.[78]

Ironically, the assassination of Zengi in 541/1146, which was the most significant event in the reign of Temürtash and assured the continued existence of the Artuqid dynasty as a separate political entity in Diyar Bakr, is not mentioned here by Ibn Shaddad, since Zengi was killed at Qal'at Ja'bar. Ibn Shaddad's account of the event is closely modelled on that of Ibn al-Azraq in Ms. B, but is written in a different part of his narrative under his description of that place. It is thus completely divorced from some of the political events which preceded it.[79] Its particular location in Ibn Shaddad's text is enough to deprive it of its crucial political significance. This is an apt illustration of the limitations imposed on Ibn Shaddad by the genre he has chosen and his inability to break free from its constraints.

Incidentally, further confirmation of Ibn Shaddad's dependence on the Ms. B version of Ibn al-Azraq is provided by internal stylistic evidence. In his account of the reign of İl-Ghazi, Ibn Shaddad calls Dubays 'Sayf al-Dawla Dubays b. Sadaqa al-Mazyadi'.[80] The title المزيدى 'al-Mazyadi' occurs only in Ms. B.[81] İl-Ghazi is written in Marsh 333 ايلغازى as in Ms. B, whereas in Ms. A it appears as الغازى. The word 'tents', which is written so strangely in Ms. A as خركاوات, appears in both Marsh 333 and Ms. B as خركاهات.[82] These are merely a few of the numerous occasions when Ibn Shaddad uses the exact wording of Ms. B.

The abilities of Ibn al-Azraq and Ibn Shaddad as historians are closely matched. Both writers invite severe criticisms as to their methods, lack of clarity and inaccuracies. However, Ibn Shaddad fails even more signally than

Ibn al-Azraq in general respects. His grasp of genealogy is unusually defective. A few examples will suffice to illustrate this weakness, which pervades his work. Toghan Arslan al-Ahdab, the ruler of Arzan and Bitlis, is called Toghan Arslan *ibn* al-Ahdab,[83] and the key figure of İl-Ghazi b. Artuq is given the appellations İl-Ghazi b. Suqman[84] and on another occasion 'the son of Suqman's brother'.[85] There is some justification for Ibn Shaddad's confusion over the identity of the Artuqid al-Yaquti, since his bewilderment is shared by Ibn al-Azraq himself in his genealogical accounts. But Ibn Shaddad labels al-Yaquti as 'the son of the sister of Suqman'[86] and elsewhere 'the son of Artuq',[87] whilst in another place it is Suqman whom he calls 'the son of Artuq'.[88]

More serious, however, than a poor grasp of family history is his lack of original information. He seems content to provide somewhat inadequate digests of, or practically verbatim quotations from, extant sources without putting his own stamp on the material. Even the promising scheme of arranging the material under the rubric of the relevant town degenerates into a tedious chronology of the people who took the town or fought over it. The presence of unusual, if not entirely original, material in the work of Ibn al-Azraq, who draws it from eyewitness accounts or from his own experience, immediately increases the value of his badly written, uncoordinated narrative. Ibn Shaddad shares these last two failings but cannot compensate for them in the historical part of his work on the Jazira by the presence of any interesting new material. Moreover, although he makes some selection of the material he takes from Ibn al-Azraq, he does not attempt to analyse or slant the borrowed information. Whilst it is possible to agree with Elisséeff when he declares that Ibn Shaddad 'affords the reader a general view', it is hard to accept his praise of Ibn Shaddad for 'the clarity of his exposition'.[89] The framework of Marsh 333 is clear enough but too often the historical facts contained in it are garbled and imperfectly grasped. This is the inevitable outcome of the unhappy marriage of two sources, Ibn al-Azraq and Ibn al-Athir, without the overall focus and unity which could have been provided by an author in command of his material.

Whilst Ibn Shaddad borrows extensively from Ibn al-Azraq, the geographical descriptions given by Ibn Shaddad have an independent value[90] and shed some light on places and buildings mentioned by Ibn al-Azraq. Indeed,

Marsh 333 is a valuable complement to the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* since it concentrates on the exact locality of Ibn al-Azraq's work. Marsh 333 is written in a clear, legible hand and Ibn Shaddad's long list of fortresses which date from pre-Islamic and Islamic times[91] helps with the decipherment of some of the difficult names mentioned by Ibn al-Azraq. Unfortunately, Ibn Shaddad does not specify the exact location in Diyar Bakr of the many citadels mentioned but the fact that he places them in the vicinity of Amid, Mayyafariqin, Arzan and Mardin helps to narrow the field of choice and is therefore of some value.

Ibn Shaddad's description of Mayyafariqin, however, is much more precise. He identifies buildings such as the *Burj al-mulk*, the *Burj al-Rawabi* and the *Bab al-Huwa*, often mentioned cursorily by Ibn al-Azraq, who assumes that his reader is acquainted with them. He mentions the suburb known as al-Muhaddatha and the citadel[92] and a wealth of other details.

Ibn Wasil and Ibn al-Azraq

The work entitled *Mufarrij al-kurub fi akhbar Bani Ayyub* by Ibn Wasil (604/1207–697/1298) is well known as a principal source for the history of the Ayyubids. Cahen lavishes high praise on this author, saying that it is scandalous that this work of his is virtually never used.[93] Elisséeff also mentions Ibn Wasil, emphasising the alertness with which the *Mufarrij al-kurub* is written.[94] Neither of these scholars, however, have recognised the debt owed by Ibn Wasil to Ibn al-Azraq. They both list the written sources used by Ibn Wasil, mentioning the works of Ibn al-Athir and Ibn al-'Adim.[95] Elisséeff adds that for the period of Nur al-Din, Ibn Wasil also drew on Sibt b. al-Jawzi, 'Imad al-Din and Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad.[96] It was the editor of Ibn Wasil, Jamal al-Din al-Shayyal, who pinpointed the dependence of the *Mufarrij al-kurub* on the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*,[97] although he did not explore this topic in any detail. The value of a comparison between Ibn Wasil and Ibn al-Azraq is both linguistic and historical, as with the other three authors discussed in this article.

The dependence of Ibn Wasil on Ibn al-Azraq takes the form of substantial borrowings from one particular section of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* when the author describes in detail the murder of the caliph al-Mustarshid, the subsequent accession and deposition of his son al-Rashid and

the circumstances of the appointment of a new caliph, al-Muqtafi. Of less significance is Ibn Wasil's inclusion of the scabrous episode about al-Rashid's sexual precocity which he probably found too outré or amusing to omit. The selection by Ibn Wasil of the area of Ibn al-Azraq's work which deals with these three caliphs and their relationship with the Seljuq sultan, Masʿud, is significant and intelligent. For this part of his text, Ibn al-Azraq's information, as he himself admits, is culled from some of the principal protagonists in the events themselves and does not appear to be in any other extant source contemporary with Ibn al-Azraq's work. Not only does Ibn Wasil choose original material from Ibn al-Azraq but he also selects a key historical issue, namely the relationship between the ʿAbbasid caliphs in the sixth/twelfth century and the Seljuq sultans. Ibn Wasil concentrates his borrowings from Ibn al-Azraq on this topic, leaving aside the rest of the author's work and opting to follow the more lucid account of the *Ta'rikh al-bahir fi' l-dawla al-atabakiyya*[98] by Ibn al-Athir for the general lines of his narrative elsewhere in the *Mufarrij al-kurub*.

The first important episode which Ibn Wasil borrows without acknowledgement from Ibn al-Azraq is the account of the decision of al-Mustarshid to leave Baghdad and his subsequent murder outside Maragha in 529/1134–5.[99] Ibn Wasil's description is modelled extremely closely on that of Ibn al-Azraq in the version contained in Ms. A. Indeed, the wording is virtually identical. Ibn Wasil adds a few explanatory comments, such as genealogical details about the Sultans Mahmud and Masʿud, and he omits the odd phrase. He amends the wording of the line from al-Mutanabbi which is quoted wrongly in Ms. A but written correctly in Ms. B, and changes من الغبن to من العجز.[100] He also adds the statement that the line which the caliph was reciting was a quotation from al-Mutanabbi.[101]

A more significant modification to the text is Ibn Wasil's omission of Ibn al-Azraq's own description of the castle of Sar-i Jahan which he says he visited in 549/1154–5.[102] Perhaps Ibn Wasil wished to conceal this obvious reference to the source of his information or he may have felt that his own text could dispense with such a description.

As regards the subject matter of this anecdote, Ibn Wasil is generally content to keep to both the details and the main sweep of events as recorded in Ibn al-Azraq. But he cannot let the murder of the caliph pass without some

kind of amendment to Ibn al-Azraq's version. Even Ibn al-Azraq makes a rare departure from his bald recital of events to record two conflicting reports on those responsible for the murder of the caliph. He writes that according to one source, Sanjar sent the murderers, whilst another attributes the blame to Mas'ud.[103] Ibn Wasil rejects Ibn al-Azraq's statements and breaks off the narrative of Ibn al-Azraq's informant, Ibn al-Anbari, to write the following lines:[104]

و وصل ... رسول ... برسالة ظاهرها التقدم اليه بتعظيم الخليفة .... و باطنها التدمير عليه و الراحة منه

Whatever the source of this account, by its inclusion Ibn Wasil places the blame for the death of al-Mustarshid firmly on Sanjar. The details of Mas'ud's ostentatious display of false grief, however, clearly implicate him too: أظهر السلطان مسعود الجزع العظيم و الحزن الكثير

The second extract from Ibn al-Azraq to which Ibn Wasil accords extended treatment in his history is the very interesting account of Sultan Mas'ud's meeting with officials in which he explained his views on the future role of the caliphate.[105] Here the subject-matter is of such value that Ibn Wasil quotes Ibn al-Azraq almost entirely verbatim.[106] He again adds short explanatory comments on the identities of the uncles of Rashid who are potential claimants to the caliphate and changes the wording of Ibn al-Azraq. For Ibn al-Azraq's phrase السلطان مسعود نفذ احضرنا Ibn Wasil writes simply احضرنا, whilst instead of Ibn al-Azraq's version اريد يجلس الا من Ibn Wasil prefers و لا اريد يلي الامر الا رجل. Other than these minor linguistic changes, however, Ibn Wasil retains this valuable portion of his source virtually intact.

He then moves on to the episode of al-Rashid and the slave-girls.[107] In the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* the flow of Ibn al-Azraq's important political narrative is interrupted by this obtrusive and irrelevant anecdote which he places between Mas'ud's statement on the qualities he is seeking from any future caliph and the next major passage which deals with the circumstances of the selection of al-Muqtafi.[108] The inclusion of this scandalous titbit of court gossip introduces a completely inappropriate tone to one of the most interesting parts of Ibn al-Azraq's text. Ibn Wasil is also unable to resist the temptation to include the Rashid episode, although it detracts greatly from the unity of his narrative. He could easily have included it elsewhere,

for example when dealing with al-Rashid's death.[109] Although he chooses to retain the Rashid anecdote, Ibn Wasil removes some of the more explicit statements, no doubt from motives of propriety.

The remainder of the material which Ibn Wasil has borrowed from Ibn al-Azraq deals with the latter's extremely detailed account of events from the second meeting of Mas'ud with the Baghdad officials until the oath of allegiance sworn to al-Muqtafi.[110] These pages of Ibn Wasil's history are copied very closely from Ibn al-Azraq.[111] His dependence on his source is, however, not total, since he adds several minor explanatory comments of his own, and when other information is available to him he incorporates it into his text. For example, Ibn al-Azraq mentions that al-Rashid got in touch with Zengi in 529/1134–5 asking him to come and give him support in Baghdad. From his reading of other historians, especially Ibn al-Athir, Ibn Wasil can explain at this point exactly what Zengi was doing and outlines his subsequent actions before reaching Baghdad.[112] Once in Baghdad, Zengi encountered a number of border lords who had assembled to fight Sultan Mas'ud.

This information is not found in the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*. Ibn Wasil resumes his borrowing from Ibn al-Azraq with the account of how al-Rashid imprisoned the members of the caliphal family in a cellar,[113] his escape to Mosul and his deposition.

In this long narrative modelled closely on the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*, Ibn Wasil makes few changes of wording. This is not too surprising. This part of Ibn al-Azraq's text is much more lucid than the unexplained, staccato scraps of information about the history of Diyar Bakr which punctuate his work. There is an unexpected unity about these stories of the three 'Abbasid caliphs and their relations with the Saljuq sultan, Mas'ud, which suggests that Ibn al-Azraq must have written detailed notes of his conversations with his principal informant, Ibn al-Anbari. His account is clear and better expressed than usual.

Ibn Wasil, then, selects only a limited area of Ibn al-Azraq's work for inclusion in his text. He well recognises the value of the material he chooses. Cahen praises the intelligent, coherent presentation of facts which characterises the *Mufarrij al-kurub* and comments on its precise if not elegant language.[114] Certainly, Ibn Wasil manifests such qualities in his treatment of Ibn al-Azraq as a source, since he rejects other areas of the *Ta'rikh Mayyajariqin*

wa-Amid from which he might also have borrowed material. For such crucial topics as the career of Zengi he obviously prefers the clear account of Ibn al-Athir to the incomplete and garbled version of Ibn al-Azraq with its chaotic chronology. It could therefore be said that he has recourse to Ibn al-Azraq only as a last resort, when the material he needs is not available elsewhere.

The manner in which Ibn Wasil welds into a continuous narrative the sections from Ibn al-Azraq dealing with the ʻAbbasid caliphate between 529–532/1134–7 is an object lesson on the use of a muddled source by a lucid historian. He enhances their importance and thereby highlights at once the wealth of information contained in the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* and the very unsatisfactory way in which such information is presented.

Conclusions

Since Ibn al-Azraq was writing a town chronicle he naturally included a large amount of local material about Mayyafariqin and its surrounding area. Nevertheless, despite the limitations of the subject-matter and the archaic language used in the text, Ibn al-Azraq's work appears to have been well known to later Muslim historians over a wide geographical area, from Iraq to Egypt. Whether their frequent use of his text was due to the wide dispersal of copies of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*, or whether the text was accessible to them through other works now lost, is not clear.

These writers draw on the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* in various different ways, with or without acknowledgement to its author. Sometimes they paraphrase Ibn al-Azraq's words; on other occasions they borrow portions of the text unchanged. The joins between their own material and that which they have borrowed are rarely advertised. It is a commonplace that Arab writers saw no shame in plagiarism. A great part of their work was quotation and a writer often neglected to mention the source of his material, viewing this as of little interest to himself, or his readers. Only in the case of Ibn Khallikan[115] are there some grounds for speculating that he deliberately suppressed a reference to his source in certain important passages.

This article has considered only four writers who copy Ibn al-Azraq: Sibt b. al-Jawzi, Ibn Khallikan, Ibn Shaddad and Ibn Wasil. The value of a comparison between their borrowings and the original passages from Ibn al-Azraq is two-fold. By making a detailed comparison between the same

passage in two different texts it is possible to gain useful insights into the meaning of obscure vocabulary and unconventional syntax. It is, however, of greater significance to analyse and discuss the choice of material selected by later Muslim historians since it is a valuable indication of the areas of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* which they considered interesting. Their selection provides a possible pointer to which parts of Ibn al-Azraq's account display originality or special information.

Ibn Khallikan's borrowings may be excluded here since he is interested in specific details about individual personalities. Moreover, Ibn Shaddad borrows from Ibn al-Azraq in such a wholesale, indiscriminate fashion that he too is of little value in assessing the relative merits of the various sections of Ibn al-Azraq's work. However, the other two authors – Sibt b. al-Jawzi with his interest in the Georgian material and Ibn Wasil who concentrates on material which clarifies the relationship between caliph and sultan in the sixth/twelfth century – successfully highlight the wider interest of the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid*, outside its more obvious role as the principal source for the history of the Jazira in the period 1100–50.

A few tentative conclusions may now be drawn. The study of these four authors and their use of Ibn al-Azraq's text has revealed that writers composing in several different genres and therefore with varying aims drew on this work. Clearly it was more common for Ibn al-Azraq's history to be used uncritically than selectively. Moreover, later writers applied their critical faculties principally to the task of selection rather than to the task of evaluating Ibn al-Azraq's information. It is probable that the *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin wa-Amid* was considered sufficiently useful to be available in several copies and that a version of the text existed which was similar to Ms. A although not identical. The existence of a third manuscript of substantially similar content to one of the two which survives, and of no later than thirteenth-century date, provides a modicum of evidence in favour of the theory that much of Ibn al-Azraq's text – at least for the period 1100–50 – has survived in Ms. A. At all events, the borrowings of the four writers discussed in this article afford no grounds for believing that Ms. A is lacunary. It is apparent that authors who were not themselves noted as great stylists felt, not surprisingly, the need to change, to a varying extent, the infelicitous, provincial Arabic of their source. Finally, the popularity of his text among

writers of the next four generations strongly suggests that Ibn al-Azraq was probably the major source available for the area of the Jazira in the period 1100–50.

Notes

1. C. Cahen, 'Le Diyar Bakr au temps des premiers Urtuqides', *Journal Asiatique* 227 (1935), 220.
2. Ibn al-Azraq's account of the reigns of İl-Ghazi and Temürtash has been edited and translated, with commentary, by the present author as part of an unpublished doctoral thesis: *The History of the Jazira 1100–1150: The Contribution of Ibn al-Azraq al-Fariqi*, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1979).
3. J. Fück, *'Arabiya*, tr. C. Denizeau (Paris, 1955), 176–91.
4. Ibid., 191. Cf. I. Schen, 'Usama Ibn Munqidh's memoirs: some further light on Muslim Middle Arabic', *Journal of Semitic Studies* 17/2 (1972), 218–36 and ibid., 18/1 (1973), 64–98.
5. Born 582/1186–7; died 654/1256–7.
6. C. Cahen, *La Syrie du Nord à l'époque des Croisades et la principauté franque d'Antioche* (Paris, 1940), 65.
7. Cahen, *La Syrie*, 66.
8. F. Gabrieli, 'The Arabic historiography of the Crusades', in B. Lewis and P. M. Holt (eds), *Historians of the Middle East* (London, 1962), 105.
9. Cf. the edition by B. A. L. 'Awad (revised by M. S. Ghorbal) of an earlier part of this text: *Ta'rikh al-Fariqi* (Cairo, 1959), 138–9.
10. H. F. Amedroz, 'Three Arabic MSS. on the history of the city of Mayyafariqin', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1902), 799. Amedroz says that the information in Sibt b. al-Jawzi is to be found in Or. 4619, f. 216b.
11. Ibid.; Amedroz cites Or. 4619, f. 217a here.
12. *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades, Historiens Orientaux* 3 (Paris, 1884), 533.
13. 'Awad, *Ta'rikh al-Fariqi*, 272–3.
14. *Recueil* 3, 533.
15. *Mir'at al-zaman* 8 (Hyderabad, 1951), 101.
16. Ms. A, f. 161a–b; Ms. B. f. 102a–f. 103a.
17. Cf. Schen, 'Usama', 65.
18. This is not the same as saying that Sibt b. al-Jawzi 'quotes Ibn al-Azraq's words' ('Awad, *Ta'rikh al-Fariqi*, 60). Such a statement is far from true as a generalisation.

19. Ms. A and B: نفذوا الى السلطان.
20. Ms. A and B: فنفذ لهم شحنة.
21. Ms. A and B: و نفذوا الى نجم الدين.
22. Tughril was the Seljuq ruler of Arran while Toghan Arslan held Arzan and Bitlis.
23. *Mir'at al-zaman* 8, 101–2. The original passages in Ibn al-Azraq occur on f. 162a (Ms. A) and ff. 103b–104b (Ms. B).
24. *Mir'at al-zaman* 8, 102.
25. Ms. A, f. 162a–b; Ms. B, f. 104b.
26. Sibt b. al-Jawzi mentions that Sulaiman b. İl-Ghazi and the Khatun, the widow of İl-Ghazi, managed by means of a deception to enter Mayyafariqin in 516/1122 after the death of İl-Ghazi, but he fails to extract the full flavour of the anecdote because he only recounts half of it (*Mir'at al-zaman* 8, 103; Ibn al-Azraq, Ms. A, f. 162b and Ms. B, ff. 104b–105a).
27. M. F. Brosset, *Histoire de la Géorgie* 1 (St Petersburg, 1858), 368–9; O. Turan, *Selcuklular Tarihi ve Türk–Islam Medeniyeti* (Ankara, 1965), 182.
28. Cf. C. E. Bosworth in *The Cambridge History of Iran* 5, 150.
29. Ms. B does not mention that the troops of Toghril and Toghan Arslan had not arrived in Tiflis when King David and his son attacked İl-Ghazi. This detail is included in both Ms. A and Sibt b. al-Jawzi. Moreover, Ms. B specifically mentions the year in which King David entered Tiflis (the end of 515 AH/1122), which is in neither Ms. A nor the *Mir'at al-zaman*.
30. Unlike Ibn al-Athir, who, as Gibb has convincingly shown, was greatly influenced by his own beliefs and prejudices when borrowing material from Ibn al-Qalanisi (H. A. R. Gibb, 'Notes on the history of the early Crusades', *BSOS* 7 (1933–5), 745–54).
31. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-a'yan* (Cairo, 1299 AH), 2 vols.
32. M. de Slane, *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary*, 4 vols (Paris and London, 1843–71). See also F. Wüstenfeld, *Ueber die Quellen des Werkes Ibn Challikani vitae illustrium hominum* (Göttingen, 1837).
33. Amedroz, 'Three Arabic MSS.', 799.
34. 'Awad, *Ta'rikh al-Fariqi*, 41–8.
35. For an appreciation of Ibn al-Tiqtaqa see J. B. Kritzeck, 'Ibn al-Tiqtaqa and the fall of Baghdad', in J. B. Kritzeck and R. B. Winder (eds), *The World of Islam: Studies in Honor of P. K. Hitti* (London, 1959), 159–84.
36. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat* I, 222. The comparable account in Ibn al-Azraq is to be found on Ms. A, f. 165b and Ms. B, f. 111b.

37. He merely writes: 'There had been a report that Dubays had incited the sultan to kill al-Mustarshid'.
38. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat* 1, 223.
39. This appears to be based more on Ms. B than on Ms. A. The burial of Dubays in Ms. B is followed by the account of the sultan's marriage to the daughter of Dubays, whereas in Ms. A the order is reversed. But the dependence on Ms. B remains far from proven.
40. The vizier, al-Manazi, collected many books which he bequeathed as a *waqf* to the mosques of Mayyafariqin and Amid (Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat* I, 55*;* Ibn al-Azraq, Ms. A, ff. 134b–135a, Ms. B, f. 44a).
41. 'Three pillars'.
42. Ms. A, f. 162b; cf. also Ms. B, f. 105a.
43. De Slane, *Biographical Dictionary* I, 157–9. 'Al-Muhdatha' is de Slane's version of the name; 'al-Muhaddatha' seems a preferable reading.
44. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat* 2, 93.
45. Ibn al-Azraq, Ms. A, f. 175b; Ms. B, f. 133b.
46. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat* 2, 93. The relevant passage in Ibn al-Azraq is to be found in Ms. A, f. 165a.
47. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat* I, 597.
48. Ms. A, ff. 171 b–172a.
49. Ms. A, ff. 173b and 174b; Ms. B, f. 131a–b.
50. Instead of 'the son of Kamal al-Din Abu Ahmad al-Jalal' (Ms. A, f. 173 b [*sic*]), Ibn Khallikan has 'Jalal al-Din Abu Ahmad, son of Kamal al-Din' *(Wafayat* I, 598). For Taj al-Din Abu'1-Fada'il al-Diya' (Ms. A, f. 173b [*sic*]), Ibn Khallikan writes 'Diya' al-Din Abu'1-Fada'il al-Qasim, son of Taj al-Din' (ibid.).
51. Ms. A, f. 172a; Ms. B, ff. l27b–128a.
52. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat* l, 507.
53. Ms. A, f. 172a.
54. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat* l, 241.
55. The section of this work which deals with the Jazira is unpublished. The part which describes Damascus has been edited (Ibn Shaddad, *La Déscription de Damas d'Ibn Šaddad*, ed. S. Dahan (Damascus, 1956)).
56. 'Three Arabic MSS.', 800. Amedroz estimates that about a quarter of the contents of Marsh 333 comes from Ibn al-Azraq.
57. Cf. a note written by Amedroz at the front of the Bodleian manuscript, Marsh 333, where he states that the work is the 'second volume of *al-A'laq al-Khatira fi dhikr umara' al-Sham wa'l-Jazira* of Ibn Shaddad of Aleppo'.

58. C. Cahen, ‘La Djazira au milieu du treizième siècle d’après ‘Izz ad-Din Ibn Chaddad’, *Revue des Études Islamiques* 8 (1934), 109–28. In this work Cahen gives no assessment of the author.
59. Cahen, ‘La Djazira’, 110.
60. Marsh 333, ff. 79b and 81b.
61. The account of how an early Artuqid, Yaquti, took Mardin is given twice: once under Mardin (Ms. B, ff. 132b–133a) and again under Ra’s al-‘Ain (Ms. B, f. 42b). On both occasions it is a long narrative based on the same passage from Ibn al-Athir (ed. Tornberg, 10, 269).
62. Ms. Marsh 333, ff. 101b–l05a.
63. Cf. for example, Ibn Shaddad’s rapid historical surveys of the towns of Sinjar (f. 45a) and Saruj (f. 31b).
64. Ms. B, f. l02a.
65. Marsh 333, f. l02a.
66. Ms. B, f. 102b.
67. Marsh 333, f. l02a–b.
68. Marsh 333, f. 102b.
69. Marsh 333, ff. 103a–105a.
70. Ms. B, ff. 107a–f. 137b.
71. Marsh 333, f. 103a; Ms. B, ff. 106b–107a.
72. Marsh 333, f. 103a; Ms. B, f. 107a.
73. Marsh 333, f. 103a–b; Ms. B, f. 109a.
74. Marsh 333, f.104a; Ms. B, f. 122b–123a.
75. Marsh 333, f. 104a; Ms. B, f. 123a.
76. Marsh 333, f. 104b; Ms. B, f. 135b–136a.
77. Marsh 333, ff. 104b–105a; Ms. B, ff. 136b–137b.
78. Marsh 333, f. 104b; Ms. B, ff. 13Sb–f. 136a.
79. Marsh 333, f. 34a–b; Ms. B, ff.126b–127b.
80. Marsh 333, f. 102a.
81. Ms. A, f. 161b; Ms. B, f. 102b.
82. Ms. A, f. 161a; Ms. B, f. 101b; Marsh 333, f. 102a.
83. Marsh 333, f. 102a.
84. Marsh 333, f. 101b and f. 133b.
85. Marsh 333, f. 43b.
86. f. 132b.
87. f. 43a.
88. f. 127b.

89. N. Elisséeff, *Nur ad-din. Un grand prince musulman de Syrie au temps des Croisades* (Damascus, 1967), I, 85.
90. Dahan calls Ibn Shaddad's account of the Jazira 'the best ancient Arabic source on the region' (S. Dahan, 'The origin and development of the local histories of Syria', in B. Lewis and P. M. Holt (eds), *Historians of the Middle East* (London, 1962), 116).
91. Marsh 333, ff. 65a–b.
92. ff. 67a–69a cover the complete description of Mayyafariqin.
93. Cahen, *La Syrie*, 70.
94. Elisséeff, *Nur ad-din* l, 62.
95. Cahen, *La Syrie*, 69; Elisséeff, *Nur ad-din* I, 61.
96. Elisséeff, *Nur ad-din* I, 61.
97. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij al-kurub fi akhbar Bani Ayyub*, ed. Jamal al-Din al-Shayyal (Cairo, 1953), I, 16–17.
98. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Ta'rikh al-bahir fi'l-dawla al-atabakiyya*, ed. 'Abd al-Qadir Ahmad Tulaymat (Cairo, 1963).
99. Ms. A, ff. 165a–b; the parallel account by Ibn Wasil is on pp. 58–60 of al-Shayyal's edition.
100. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 59.
101. The accurate rendering of the line is as follows: و اذ لم يكن من الموت بد فمن العجز ان تموت جبانا
102. Ms. A, f. 165a.
103. Ms. A, f. 165b.
104. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 61.
105. Ms. A, f. 165b; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 61–2.
106. It is interesting to note that Ibn al-Furat also borrows a substantial portion of this material. Indeed, Ibn al-Furat (734/1334–808/1405) borrows extensively from Ibn Wasil and it is clear that Ibn al-Azraq's text is reproduced by Ibn al-Furat from the version made by Ibn Wasil. All the minor changes of wording made by Ibn Wasil also occur in the text of Ibn al-Furat (Ibn al-Furat, *Ta'rikh al-duwal wa'l-muluk*, Vienna Ms. A.F. l18, 2, ff. 68b–69a). On other occasions Ibn al-Furat admits his dependence on Ibn al-Azraq's text itself, as for example in his account of the death of Sultan Mahmud in 525/1130–l where he acknowledges his source (f. 29b).
107. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 62.
108. Ms. A, f. 166a.
109. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 70.

110. Ms. A, ff. l66a–167a; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 63, 65–7.
111. Ibn al-Furat also borrows parts of Ibn Wasil's text here (*Ta'rikh al-duwal*, ff. l44b–145a).
112. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 63.
113. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 65.
114. Cahen, *La Syrie*, 70.
115. A minor exception is Ibn Wasil's omission of the reference to Sar-i Jahan (*supra*, 42).

2

A Neglected Episode of the *Reconquista*: A Christian Success in the Second Crusade

The Second Crusade is well known as a Crusade which achieved very little. Stunned by the fall of Edessa to Zengi in 1144, Europe had been mobilised once again to fight the Crusade in the Holy Land and had been stirred into religious ferment by the preaching of Bernard of Clairvaux.[1] Yet, once in the Holy Land, the Second Crusade petered out into an almost complete fiasco.

It is therefore of some interest to turn to a modest Christian success which occurred at this very time at the other end of the Muslim world: the capture of Lisbon by Afonso I of Portugal in 1147 is well known,[2] but the role played by Crusaders from northern Europe in this victory has been so far inadequately stressed.[3] Indeed, Afonso's acquisition of Lisbon for the Christians would have been impossible without the unexpected but timely help of Crusaders on their way to the Near East to join in the Second Crusade.[4]

Outside Portugal the incident has evinced less scholarly interest than might have been expected. The role of the Crusaders from England, North Germany and the Netherlands in the capture of Lisbon from the Muslims in 1147 was described by H. A. R. Gibb in 1935 in a few pages forming part of a longer account of Crusading activity in Portugal, but certain aspects of this interesting incident merit somewhat more detailed discussion than he devoted to them.[5] It is fortunate that there is a detailed account available of the fall of Lisbon, written by an English participant in the events, whose Latin chronicle entitled *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi* is extant.[6]

Not surprisingly, there would appear to be no account of the fall of Lisbon in the Arabic sources. Ibn al-Athir, for example, concentrates his attention on

the rise of the Almohads and on their early activities in al-Andalus.[7] He is also objective enough to chronicle the victories of both Roger of Sicily[8] and Alfonso VII of Spain.[9] Even Maghribi and Hispano-Arabic sources appear to yield no information on the fall of Lisbon.[10] Perhaps the loss by the Muslims of a major fortified port of the Iberian Atlantic seaboard might have deserved at least a passing mention in Muslim sources.[11] As it is, there is no way of checking the detailed account in *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi* which, it must be admitted, is in some ways very biased. Its author is especially subjective in his descriptions of the national rivalries of different Crusader groups. But his chronicle is nevertheless invaluable.

It is important first to set the scene before discussing the fall of Lisbon in some detail. It seems generally agreed that towards the end of the 1130s, some measure of stability and balance had been achieved amongst the Christian states of the Iberian Peninsula and Christian pressure on the south increased. This situation enabled the young Portuguese king, Afonso Henriques, who had acceded to power in 1128 to turn his attention to fighting the Muslims on his doorstep, for both territorial and economic motives.[12] His task was of course facilitated by the declining power of the Almoravids in al-Andalus in the 1130s.[13]

In the Muslim area of Portugal, a number of princelings seem to have flourished in this period of Almoravid decline: amongst them was Ibn Qasi in the area of Silvés who allied himself with the new rising Muslim power, the Almohads,[14] and Sidray b. Wazir[15] whose alleged role in the siege of Lisbon will be discussed below.

We turn now to the events of the year 1147. By March Afonso of Portugal had achieved a major military success when he captured Santarém.[16] Encouraged by this, he turned his attention to Lisbon. The capture of this important Muslim possession would, however, as he well knew, be impossible without a fleet. This he did not possess. Already once before in 1140, he had enlisted the help of a passing fleet of some seventy Crusader ships, which had come into Oporto, in an unsuccessful attempt to take Lisbon by both land and sea. Now, in 1147, after his capture of the Almoravid stronghold of Santarém on 15 March, Afonso still had no fleet with which to take Lisbon although the time was obviously ripe for such a move. It was at this point that fate literally 'blew' help to him. The famous motto 'Deus flavit'

which appeared on the Armada victory medals minted much later by Queen Elizabeth I was equally appropriate on this occasion, but the outcome was now to be to Christian Iberia's advantage.

Many French and German Crusaders had taken the land route to the Holy Land via Constantinople after the call of the Second Crusade. But in the Low Countries and Britain it was decided to take the sea route through the Straits of Gibraltar. Thus it came about that on 19 May 1147 there met in the English port of Dartmouth a contingent of German ships, a Flemish fleet and a number of English Crusader vessels. According to *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, the ships numbered around 164.[17] This diverse group swore oaths of unity and set out on Friday, 23 May 1147 on their way to Palestine. A storm arose and the various groups became dispersed. One contingent took refuge in Gozon and then visited Compostela which boosted their flagging morale. Eventually on 16 June all the dispersed Crusader elements reassembled at Oporto.

It was at this point that Afonso decided to turn the presence of the Crusading fleet to his own advantage. It had, after all, been officially announced in the first Lateran Council of 1123 that to fight the Muslims in Iberia was equal in importance and spiritual merit to fighting in Jerusalem.[18] On Afonso's behalf, therefore, the bishop of Oporto addressed the Crusaders in Latin,[19] informing them of Afonso's need of them in his fight against the infidels. The bishop further stressed the fact that their Crusader vow obliged them to wage war against the infidels, not only in the Holy Land but wherever they might be.[20] The bishop also mentioned that Afonso would give money to the Crusader forces insofar as the resources of the treasury would permit.[21]

The last factor, at least, strongly attracted many of the Crusaders. A treaty was accordingly drawn up between them and the Portuguese king. In his full account of this agreement, the author of *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi* mentions that the Crusaders were given the right to plunder Lisbon, provided that they then immediately handed over the city to the king.[22] While the bishop was haranguing the Crusaders, Afonso had already assembled his troops before Lisbon. The Crusaders then joined him there by sea and anchored in the Tagus on 28 June. It was no easy task to take Lisbon. The authorities in the city refused an offer to surrender,[23] and the siege thereupon began – Afonso positioned himself to the north,[24] the Englishmen to the

west, the Germans and Dutch to the east.[25] In August, the citizens made a vain attempt to obtain help from the *qa'id* (*alcaiz*) of Évora who, according to *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi* refused to do anything, as he had concluded a truce with Afonso. The governor advised Lisbon to surrender.[26]

On 21 October the inhabitants of Lisbon surrendered, asking for safe conduct. They said they were prepared to make terms with the king, Afonso, because he would keep his promises, but not with the Crusaders, whom they found 'immoral, faithless, disloyal and ferocious'.[27] Afonso himself had difficulty in agreeing suitable terms with the Crusaders and at one point during the night said he would withdraw from the siege because his honour was more important to him even than taking Lisbon. By morning, however, everything was settled. Three hundred Crusaders were appointed to see that Lisbon was taken in an orderly and appropriate manner.[28] On 24 October the gates of the city were opened. Then 300 of the besiegers, followed by the king with some of his Portuguese knights, went up to the castle, set up the cross there and sang a *Te Deum*.[29]

Meanwhile, however, a sorry tale was beginning to unfold elsewhere in the city. Other Crusaders burst into the city and began to plunder the homes and ill-treat the inhabitants. The 'episcopus' of Lisbon was killed. According to *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi* there was fierce rivalry between the English and the German-Flemish contingents and he blames the latter for the death of the 'episcopus' and for the massacre or injuring of other inhabitants of the city. Order was eventually restored but there were so many dead and wounded amongst the inhabitants of Lisbon that apparently even the Crusaders were shocked.[30] Thereafter, most of the Crusaders sailed on to Palestine at the end of the winter, leaving in early February 1148. Some, however, elected to stay behind in Portugal.[31] Afonso completed his 1147 campaign by taking Cintra, Almada and Palmela.[32] Once the Crusaders had left, Afonso arranged reasonable terms with the Muslims of Lisbon, granting them the right to live there and even to own property in the city. By 1170, with his authority extended still further, he felt stable enough to issue a charter to the Muslims in Lisbon and other cities and to lay down legislation for them.[33]

The time has now come to make a few general observations on this episode. For an isolated moment, as early as the period of the Second Crusade, the Crusading movement had been directly involved in an Iberian war.

Crusaders from northern Europe had been drawn, by chance according to *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi* in this instance, into the frontier struggle between Christians and Muslims in al-Andalus, where the weakness of the Almoravids had allowed Afonso I to extend his principality. To Afonso's skills in fighting a frontier war in familiar territory, the timely arrival of the Crusaders now added military help in blockading and attacking a fortified port such as Lisbon, and the Crusaders also brought heavy cavalry and improved engines of war.

As in the Holy Land at the very same time, the pendulum was swinging inexorably in one direction – but here in Iberia the direction was different. In Syria and the Holy Land, from the fall of Edessa onwards, the Muslims had the upper hand. They were beginning to unite, tentatively at first under the strong-arm tactics of Zengi and increasingly so under Nur al-Din, whereas the Christians had already lost the political and spiritual unity of purpose which in 1099 had gained them Jerusalem. In Spain and Portugal, on the other hand, the political initiative now lay with the Christians and it was the local Muslims who were in a disunited and fragmented state.

Much ink has already been spilt on the question of how and why the Iberian Peninsula was transformed from a tolerant society where Muslims, Christians and Jews could in general coexist harmoniously into a society where intolerance and fanaticism prevailed. The incident of the fall of Lisbon clearly represents an early stage in this process of change from tolerance to fanaticism. In general, there is no gainsaying the validity of the argument that the crucial turning-point in this process was the fall of Toledo in 1085.[34] The establishment of the Roman liturgy in Spain – a momentous change which was already well under way by the end of the eleventh century – is seen by some modern historians as being largely responsible for the loss of religious tolerance in Iberia. But Afonso seems still to have been at an earlier stage, operating on the realistic level of local politics where peaceful coexistence with his conquered Muslim subjects was the prime aim. He appears from the account of *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi* to have been genuinely appalled by the fanatical, cruel behaviour of the Crusaders when they entered Lisbon.[35] They, of course, were imbued with Crusading zeal, having been stirred up before they left home for the religious fight against the infidel and their zeal had no doubt been boosted by a visit to the shrine at Compostela.

The account of *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi* is full of details which indicate the frequent misunderstanding and suspicion felt by the Crusaders towards Afonso himself, whose practical attitude towards the Muslims irritated them. On this occasion, at least, victory prevented these tensions from opening up a serious rift between Afonso and his Crusader allies but the sharp contrast between the pragmatic Iberian approach and the intransigent stance of the northerners was all too apparent.

What of Muslim fanaticism on the other side? There seems very little likelihood that this factor played a very significant role in the fight put up by the Muslims of Lisbon in defence of their homes and property. Although al-Andalus had been directly annexed by the fanatical Almoravids, their hold over outlying provinces such as southern Portugal must have been very tenuous and it is also unlikely therefore that their religious attitudes had changed at this stage the prevailing mood of pragmatism at local level between Muslims and Christians. Al-Idrisi, visiting southern Portugal in this period, confirms how deep-rooted the Arabic language and culture were in this area.[36]

Controversy has been fierce on whether or not there were Mozarabs in the city during the siege of Lisbon. The latest treatment of this thorny question is that of Ricard,[37] who argues that there were no Mozarabs in Lisbon in 1147 and that the so-called 'Mozarabic bishop' (the translation of 'episcopus' given by David) was in fact a Muslim *qadi*, a justifiable mistake from a northern Crusader newly arrived in al-Andalus.[38] Had there been Mozarabs in Lisbon, so the argument goes, there would surely be references to them in the otherwise detailed account of *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi* both before and after the siege.[39] However persuasive Ricard's treatment of this subject may be, there are still some unsatisfactory loose ends in his interpretation. Above all, the account in *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi* of certain inhabitants of Lisbon wandering around amongst the corpses holding crosses and shouting 'Maria bona, bona Maria' is not entirely satisfactorily explained away as the typical behaviour of renegades who revert before death to their old practices.[40] The question of some Mozarab presence in Lisbon is still a possibility.[41]

When the capture of Lisbon is set within the context of the *Reconquista* as a whole, it can be seen as a small but significant gain. Afonso did extend his territory further after 1147 and isolated Crusader activity in Portugal continued from time to time in the twelfth century. But the possibility of a surge of

victories both by him and by other Christian rulers in the Iberian Peninsula was soon stemmed by the irruption into al-Andalus of the Almohads. As is well-known, their arrival set the *Reconquista* back a long time.

Notes

* It is a great honour for me to pay tribute to the scholarly achievements of Professor Sourdel by contributing to this volume.

This contribution was presented originally as a paper at the UEAI conference in Évora in 1982. I am very grateful for the helpful comments I received then and subsequently from Professors Martim Velho and Pedro Cunha Serra.

1. Cf. G. Hüffner, 'Die Anfänge des Zweiten Kreuzzuges', *Historisches Jahrbuch* VIII (1887), 397–429; E. Pfeiffer, 'Die Cistercienser und der Zweite Kreuzzug', *Cistercienser Chronik* 47 (1935), 44, n. 16.
2. Cf. U. Cosack, *Die Eroberung von Lissabon im Jahre 1147* (Halle, 1875), 3–4; A. Herculano, *Historia de Portugal*, ed. D. Lopes and P. de Azevedo (Paris and Lisbon, n.d.), III, 7–52.
3. For the role of Crusaders in the capture of Lisbon in 1147, cf. F. Kurth, 'Der Anteil niederdeutscher Kreuzfahrer an den Kämpfen der Portugiesen gegen die Mauren', *Institut für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, Mitteilungen* VIII (1909), 131–59. Cf. also, B. Kugler, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge* (Berlin, 1891), 155–6.
4. Indeed, Helmold of Bosau points out à propos the Second Crusade that 'this alone was successful of the entire work which the pilgrim army achieved'. (*Chronica Slavorum*, ed. G. Pertz (Hanover, 1868), 121–2).
5. H. A. R. Gibb, 'The English Crusaders in Portugal', in E. Prestage (ed.), *Chapters in Anglo-Portugese relations* (Watford, 1935), 1–23. This incident is discussed in C. Erdmann, 'Der Kreuzzugsgedanke in Portugal', *Historische Zeitschrift* cxli (1939–40), 33–5.
6. The chronicle has been published several times. It appeared in the collection *Portugaliae Monumenta Historica Scriptores*, vol. 1, ed. A. Herculano (Lisbon, 1856). Cf. also the version in W. Stubbs, *Chronicles and memorials of the reign of Richard I*, vol. 1 (London, 1864–5), cxliv–clxxxii. The most recent edition is that of C. W. David, who also translated the work into English, giving a parallel text in Latin, as *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi. The Conquest of Lisbon* (New York, 1936). For a discussion of the possible identity of the unknown author of the work, cf. ibid., 40–6. Gibb did not apparently know of the doubts surrounding

the authorship of this Latin chronicle. David argues that the author came with the Anglo-Norman Crusaders from East Anglia (ibid., 40) but that this is all that can be said with certainty about a chronicle which 'has long been ascribed without good reason to a certain Osbernus' (ibid., 26).

7. Ibn al-Athir, *Kamil al-Tawarikh*, ed. C. J. Tornberg (Uppsala, 1853), XI, 75, 102.
8. Ibid., 70–1.
9. Ibid., 82, 90, 98–9.
10. Cf. E. Lévi-Provençal, *Documents inédits d'histoire Almohade* (Paris, 1928); Ibn 'Idhari, *Al-bayan al-mughrib fi akhbar muluk al-Andalus wa'l-Maghrib*, tr. A. H. Miranda (Valencia, 1963).
11. The comment by Ibn al-Athir, under the year 543/1148–9, that the Frankish victories in Spain have come about because of Muslim disarray in these areas is of course true of southern Portugal, even though Ibn al-Athir is speaking more specifically of the region of Turtusha. Op. cit., 90.
12. Cf. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, art: Burtukal. Afonso Henriques (d. 1185) is generally thought to have assumed the title of king after his semi-legendary victory at Ourique in July 1139; cf. C. J. Bishko, 'The Spanish and Portugese reconquest, 1095–1492', in H. W. Hazard (ed.), *A History of the Crusades* (Wisconsin, 1975), III, 408.
13. Cf. F. Codera, *Decadencia y desparición de los Almoravides en España* (Saragossa, 1899).
14. *EI*[2], art: Ibn Kasi; *EI*[2], art: Burtukal; Codera, op. cit., 33. Ibn Qasi staged a revolt in 539/1144, benefitting from Almoravid weakness. It was as a result of moves by Ibn Qasi that the Almohad, 'Abd al-Mu'min, sent an army across into al-Andalus in 540/1145–6. For the bibliography on the establishment of the Almohads in Spain, cf. Lévi-Provençal, op. cit., 202, n. 3.
15. Cf. Miranda, op. cit., 302, n. 3. For his part in the siege of Lisbon, cf. n. 26 below.
16. G. Constable, 'The Second Crusade as seen by contemporaries', *Traditio* ix (1953), 214.
17. David, op. cit., 52.
18. Bishko, op. cit., 399.
19. David, op. cit., 71–85.
20. Ibid., 78. Cf. also Constable, op. cit., 221–3, 258.
21. David, op. cit., 84–5.
22. Ibid., 110–13.

23. According to *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, the authorities consisted on this occasion of the *qa'id* (*alcaiz*), the 'episcopus' and the chief people of the city of Lisbon. Ibid., 115–25. During the parleying, the refusal to surrender by the inhabitants of Lisbon was given by one of the elders of the city: 'quidam rex senioribus circumstantibus responsum . . . dedit' (ibid., 120).
24. Ibid., 124–5.
25. Ibid., 132–3.
26. Kurth, op. cit., 151. According to *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, the ruler of Évora was 'Abu Muhammad, king of Évora', whom David identifies as Abu Muhammad Sidray b. Wazir, lord of Évora and Beja (op. cit., 136–7, and 137–8, n. 2). Cf. also Codera, op. cit., 39–52.

    The Latin chronicle quotes the text of a letter which allegedly came from the ruler of Évora in reply to the citizens of Lisbon: 'Iampridem datis induciis cum rege Portugalensium, fidem refellere nequeo, ut eum scilicet vel suos bello perturbare velim' ('Having long since entered into a truce with the King of the Portuguese, I cannot break faith there by showing willingness to wage war upon him and his men') (op. cit., 138–9).

    Whether or not the letter is genuine, mere Realpolitik would sufficiently explain both Ibn Wazir's alliance with Afonso at this stage and his later collaboration with the Almohads. According to Ibn 'Idhari it was Ibn Wazir who in 549/1154 told 'Abd al-Mu'min about the harassment of the frontiers being carried out by Ibn al-Rink (Afonso Henriques), as a result of which 'Abd al-Mu'min sent an army (op. cit., 302). Gibb accepts without question the version of events given in *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi* and the alleged alliance between Ibn Wazir and Afonso Henriques (op. cit., 5). The submission by Ibn Wazir to the Almohads is confirmed by al-Baydaq in his history of the Almohads, cf. Lévi-Provençal, op. cit., 213.
27. David, op. cit., 170–1.
28. Ibid., 172–3.
29. Ibid., 174–5.
30. Ibid., 176–7.
31. G. Constable, 'A note on the route of the Anglo-Flemish Crusaders', *Speculum* xxvii (1953), 525.
32. Gibb, op. cit., 16; Constable, 'The Second Crusade', 235.
33. Gibb, op. cit., 16; Constable, 'The Second Crusade', 235.
34. Cf. A. Mackay, *Spain in the Middle Ages from Frontier to Empire, 1000–1500* (London, 1977), 21.

35. 'Die Kreuzfahrer erblickten in den Muslimen schlechthin die Feinde des Kreuzzugs, die am besten ganz ausgerottet würden', Erdmann, op. cit., 34.
36. Al-Idrisi, *Geografia de España*, tr. A. Blaquez (Valencia, 1974), 168.
37. R. Ricard, *Études sur l'histoire morale et religieuse du Portugal* (Paris, 1970), 32–52.
38. Ibid., 41.
39. Ibid., 36.
40. Ibid., 34–5.
41. There is contradictory evidence between two northern European sources. The author of *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi* gives the population of Lisbon as 154,000 inhabitants (David, op. cit., 94–5). Elsewhere he states that because of the devastation of the Almoravids, whom he calls the 'Moabitae', there are few Christians left in the cities of Spain (Ibid., 77). On the other hand, there is the testimony of the Norwegian king Sigurd Jorsalfar who on his way to Jerusalem visited Lisbon in 1110 and described it as 'half Christian and half pagan' (Picard, op. cit., 36).

3

Jihad Propaganda in Syria from the Time of the First Crusade until the Death of Zengi: The Evidence of Monumental Inscriptions

Introduction

It is a well-known fact, as Muslim sources themselves openly admitted,[1] that by the time the Crusaders arrived in the Near East and took Jerusalem in 1099, the disunited and strife-ridden Muslim world had lost the spirit of jihad which had already appeared at intervals in its preceding history, especially on the Byzantine and Central Asian frontiers.[2] Thanks above all to the pioneering work of the French scholar Emmanuel Sivan,[3] the gradual development of the concept of jihad as a propaganda weapon against the Crusaders has been clearly charted. Sivan argued persuasively that the real impetus towards jihad and the real propaganda campaign which underpinned that Muslim political reunification in Egypt, Syria, the Jazira and Palestine so necessary to defeat and expel the Crusaders took definitive shape under the aegis of Nur al-Din (1146–74). And no one would seriously contest his conclusion that the jihad campaign reached its climax in the time of Saladin and specifically in his recapture of Jerusalem in 1187.

It is clear that the full exploitation of an extremely effective and multifacetted jihad propaganda machine was not just a supplementary weapon in the Muslim arsenal but, on the contrary, that it was the key factor in the reunification and revitalisation of those Muslim territories contiguous with the Crusader states. Jihad propaganda – in the form of religious tracts, poems, speeches, letters, sermons, as well as the so-called *Books of jihad* and the *Fada'il al-Quds* literature which extols the virtues of visiting Palestine and more especially Jerusalem formed the basis for the military efforts centred on

Jerusalem itself. But coming events cast their shadow before. As it happens, the period before Nur al-Din, the period from the Crusader conquest of Jerusalem in 1099 to the death of Zengi in 1146, has received much less scholarly attention than it deserves within the framework of the evolution of jihad propaganda. Admittedly Sivan's book, which is extremely ambitious in scope, covering as it does the whole of the period from 1099 to 1291, devotes some discussion (some thirty-five pages out of a total of 206)[4] to Muslim activities pre-1146. A recent article by Yasir Tabbaa[5] confronts the problem of jihad directly, but here too – though there is much penetrating analysis of the architecture and inscriptions of Nur al-Din – the period before 1146 receives somewhat short shrift.

The aim here is to focus closely on the period 1099–1146 through an analysis of the evidence of historical architectural inscriptions within this time frame in the area of Syria – inscriptions, moreover, which are not anonymous but are clearly associated with specific contemporary personalities. Thereafter, some tentative conclusions will be drawn which may be of relevance in illuminating our knowledge of how jihad was reawakened in the twelfth-century Near East.

First, a few general comments by way of introduction and warning. Why focus on inscriptions? There are a number of valid reasons for doing so. First, their unfamiliarity. There is no doubt that for the period 1099–1146 their historical value has been neglected. Sivan's book is primarily based on a wide range of literary sources and pays scant attention to epigraphic evidence. It is true that Elisséeff[6] and Tabbaa made thorough use of inscriptions in their writings on Nur al-Din. Given the wealth of such material for his reign, it is perhaps inevitable that the earlier period 1099–1146 did not come under their scrutiny in the same way.

The major value of inscriptions, moreover, is their contemporaneous quality. This is in sharp contrast to literary historical sources which for the most part date from a later period and which have, therefore, to be treated with caution and stripped, if that is possible, of later prejudices and preoccupations. Thirdly, inscriptions of historical content erected in the Near East in the early twelfth century were of deliberately public nature. Virtually all of them were executed at the behest of sultans, high amirs and similar notables. Here, then, if anywhere, is the authentic voice of contemporary

propaganda. This is how these people or their entourage elected to present themselves to the public and to posterity.

Now a word of warning. A number of valid objections may be raised to the value of inscriptions as historical evidence. The actual survival of inscriptions is a capricious matter and tends to be patchy. There is, moreover, the danger of attributing too much historical value to inscriptions and to their highly stylised modes of expression. It could be argued that inscriptions too should be treated with caution, that the pace of change in inscriptions is slow, moving more according to the rhythm of modifications, however slight, in legal theory than in response to historical events. In short, the evidence of inscriptions can be peculiarly opaque and difficult to decode.

Nevertheless, there are sound reasons for a judicious use of inscriptions in historical research. The problem should be approached laterally as well as chronologically. It is not enough to mention an inscription uncritically. It should be evaluated in the context of the formulae employed in earlier and later inscriptions in the same geographical area, as well as with reference to surviving contemporary inscriptions in other areas of the Islamic world. By these lateral and chronological methods, minor changes in protocol can be properly highlighted and omissions as well as additions can be noted. If protocols become markedly longer it may be illuminating to point out how one part of the Islamic world has different emphases in its inscriptions from another.

There is often a big divide between Islamic epigraphists and Islamic historians. The former, above all van Berchem[7] and the team of scholars who compiled the *Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arabe*[8] provided an invaluable corpus of evidence. The latter, Islamic historians, usually fail to exploit that evidence. At most they cite it briefly.[9] Much the same can be said of coins, for which date and identification seem more important than mint towns or epigraphic protocols.

The Epigraphic Evidence, 1099–1146

A few general observations first. Taken laterally, within this historical time frame the corpus of published inscriptions known for the whole of the Islamic world, from Spain to Central Asia and India, contains no references at all to jihad titulature anywhere other than Syria. Predictably the full-length and

full-blown historical inscriptions in areas within Fatimid jurisdiction are preoccupied with claims and proofs of legitimacy.[10] Those in the eastern Islamic world, notably in Iran and Central Asia, have to do with support for the Sunni caliph at Baghdad and the pretensions of Sunni Turkish rulers. This dearth of references to jihad in the official epigraphic titulature of these areas makes the few but telling examples in Syria stand out all the more prominently, especially since the inscriptions from Spain, the other theatre of war with the Crusaders, reveal no comparable use of jihad titulature in the lacunary epigraphic corpus which has survived from that area.

The first evidence of jihad titulature in any inscriptions of this period appears to have been one in the name of Tughtegin, the ruler of Damascus. It is dated 514/1120 and is found on a *qubba* in the Dahdah cemetery erected by his unnamed wife, the mother of his son Buri.[11] In a full-blown protocol of titles familiar to the Perso-Turkish rulers of the Seljuq period, a new epithet has been added, *nasir al-mujahidin* ('protector of those who fight the Holy War'). Earlier inscriptions of Tughtegin have survived. None bear this title. It seems, therefore, that a new process has begun.

A key document in any discussion of jihad titulature in Syria in the Crusading period is without doubt the inscription on the tomb of the Artuqid prince Balak at Aleppo, dated 518/1124 and published by Sauvaget.[12] The inscription is revealing on two counts. Firstly, Balak, an early and much-feared opponent of the Crusaders, killed outside Manbij on 19 Rabi‘ I 518/6 May 1124, is called *sayf al-mujahidin za‘im juyush al-Muslimin qahir al-kafara wa-l-mushrikin* ('sword of those who fight the Holy War, leader of the armies of the Muslims, vanquisher of the infidels and the polytheists'). It is noteworthy that here we have a sequence of resonant titles (not just one passing title but three out of a total of eight epithets) reflecting a distinct preoccupation with jihad against the Crusaders. In other words, epigraphic norms have been overturned in the interests of exalting Balak's role as a Muslim champion in the wars against the unbelievers. In addition, Balak is given the epithet *shahid*.

Also on the tomb of Balak is a Quranic quotation, Sura 3,verse 169:

> Think not of those who are slain in the way of Allah as dead. Nay, they are living. With their Lord they have provision.[13]

According to a recent comprehensive index of Qur'anic inscriptions in medieval Islamic architecture, conducted by Dodd and Khayrallah, this quotation occurs only four times in the whole of the Islamic world.[14] The juxtaposition of jihad titulature and this particular Qur'anic verse is therefore especially noteworthy.

The next inscription bearing jihad titulature is to be found on two large black stones from Damascus.[15] These bear an elaborate inscription in the name of Tughtegin. Amongst the grandiose titles accorded to him is again that of *nasir al-mujahidin*. More significant is an inscription dated 524/1130 on a madrasa in Damascus[16] founded by the freedman of Tughtegin, Mu'in al-Din Unur, on which he describes his master (who had died a year earlier) in a series of jihad titles, *al-malik al-mujahid al-murabit al-ghazi* ('the prince, the one who fights the Holy War, the one who perseveres assiduously on the frontier (against the enemy), the warrior').

There then follows, chronologically speaking, a jihad inscription dated 527/1133 in the name of Abu'l-Hasan Yusuf b. Fayruz at Palmyra[17] in which he is described amongst the usual titles of Sunni rulers as *mu'in al-mujahidin* ('helper of those who fight the Holy War').

In another inscription dated 528/1133–4, an associate of Tughtegin, Gümüshtegin, is commemorated in a long string of titles on the Khidr mosque at Busra.[18] These include the term *zahir al-mujahidin* ('helper of those who fight the Holy War'), which recurs, also in Busra, on the *masjid al-Mibrak*, in an inscription dated 530/1136 as part of an even longer and more grandiose protocol.

Two inscriptions dedicated to Zengi deserve longer discussion. The first, undated, is on a tower at Baalbek[19] and contains a lengthy protocol, including the names Inanj Qutluq, Tughrultegin and the title 'Imad al-Din, as well as a number of Persian titles. This is a clear reference to Zengi, whose titulature is minutely analysed in these terms in a detailed article by Herzfeld.[20] The person in whose honour the inscription is written is also given the titles *amir al-mujahidin qami' al-mulhidin qahir al-kafara wa-l-mushrikin* ('commander of those who fight the Holy War, tamer of the heretics, vanquisher of the infidels and the polytheists'). The second inscription is on the mausoleum of Shaykh Muhassin at Aleppo[21] and refers also to 'Imad al-Din. In the long list of titles are included *qami' al-kafara wa-l-mushrikin za'im al-mujahidin mu'in*

al-juyush hafiz hawzat al-Muslimin ('tamer of the infidels and the polytheists, leader of those who fight the Holy War, helper of the armies, protector of the territory of the Muslims'). The inscription is dated Muharram (5)37/August 1142. Whilst it is true that much of Zengi's orientation in the earlier part of his career was directed eastward towards involvement in power struggles in Iraq as well as the Jazira,[22] we see here the beginnings of jihad nomenclature being employed for his activities in Syria even before his far-reaching victory over the Crusaders at Edessa in 1144.

It is time now to examine the preceding epigraphic evidence not in isolation but in the context of a possible epigraphic development and in comparison with what is known of the period 1099–1146 from literary historical sources. The first known occurrence of jihad titulature, the modest *nasir al-mujahidin* of Tughtegin, dated 514/1120, was most probably prompted by his participation with another Turkish warrior, İl-Ghazi, in the victory against Roger of Antioch at Darb Sarmada in Rabi' I 513/June 1119.[23] Tughtegin's career had not been without its problems, including his possible complicity in the murder of Mawdud in 507/1113 and in truces made with the Crusaders. However, he had visited the caliph at Baghdad in 1116 and may well have come back with a different concept of his role against the Crusaders.[24] Earlier epigraphic evidence which bears on Tughtegin's titles makes no mention of jihad nomenclature. The second jihad inscription in the name of Tughtegin, dated 524/1130 and put up by one of his associates, reveals a more self-confident and ambitious jihad protocol – four titles instead of one – and may well show that Tughtegin's claims to be a *mujahid* were now felt by his entourage to be more firmly established. The fourfold repetition is also evidence of an increasing contemporary interest in jihad and its implications. This eulogising inscription is found on a madrasa, a teaching institution. The inscription was intended to be read by those who were studying in the madrasa: in other words, by future members of the religious establishment, the *'ulama'*.

What of the sophisticated inscription on the tomb of Balak? Grandiose claims are being made for the 'martyr' Balak who died fighting jihad. This inscription occurs very much earlier than dates usually given for jihad 'reawakening' in twelfth-century Syria and Palestine. Perhaps this confident inscription had a very localised *raison d'être*; perhaps, indeed, it sprang from

exultation after the defeat of Roger of Antioch at Darb Sarmada. Certainly, Sivan argues that this battle appears to have evoked feelings of jihad fervour amongst the Muslims,[25] although his sources, al-ʿAzimi and Ibn al-Qalanisi, are scarcely contemporary. Sivan's statement that Balak, although he fought the Franks, hardly used jihad propaganda,[26] is not in the least compatible with the sentiments expressed on his tomb. And it is the tomb which is the most nearly contemporary witness of events. Balak had fought alongside his uncle İl-Ghazi and İl-Ghazi's ally, Tughtegin, and was an energetic soldier. The influence of Tughtegin may well have affected Balak and his entourage too.

Several of the inscriptions which bear jihad titles are on religious buildings and are linked to *waqf* endowments. Clearly, therefore, two distinct religious ideas are made to support each other.

Conclusions

What conclusions may be drawn from this discussion of inscriptions relating to jihad in the period 1099–1146? Early twelfth-century evidence shows that inscriptions featuring long sequences of titles, wherever they are to be found in the Islamic world, show little concern with jihad – except in Syria. The inscriptions of the Fatimids and more notably the Seljuq Turks, even when they are found in territory close to the Crusaders, reflect no preoccupation with jihad in spite of the fact that historical sources describe their military activities as jihad. Is this then evidence that the historical texts are rewriting history in the light of later preoccupations?

As for the epigraphic evidence within Syria itself, it is lacunary – but revealing. It is not too sweeping to suggest that there were awakenings of jihad awareness amongst some at least of the Turkish amirs fighting the Crusaders in the early twelfth century. However hollow jihad titles may have become by the Ayyubid period, it is surely significant that the timing of the *first* appearance of these titles on public buildings coincides with the first modest military victories on the part of the Muslims against the Crusaders. And by virtue of being innovations alone these titles must have had a powerful impact at the time. It is surely significant also that the Muslims began at least to interpret these victories in the light of jihad and were preparing for the more fully fledged propaganda campaigns of Nur al-Din and Saladin. It

was the jurists of Islam who interpreted jihad and it was also they who composed the wording of inscriptions, who were the leaders of public opinion and who provided the bridge between the common people and their military overlords. These modest and apparently unheralded titles on architectural monuments evoked in lapidary form echoes of earlier Islamic victories. They were a reminder of the Qur'anic passages which speak of fighting in God's path. They were also an echo which recalled the great military campaigns of the early caliphs of the seventh century. The juxtaposition of jihad titles and a relevant Qur'anic quotation on the tomb of Balak in 518/1122 is a remarkable and surprisingly early example of the linking of military and religious aims in the struggle against the Crusaders. It is a clear indication that Nur al-Din was building on foundations which had already been laid two decades earlier. It is therefore, perhaps too crude to 'explain' (as has hitherto been done) the Muslim recovery and revival of morale as stemming so clearly from a turning point after the fall of Edessa and the death of Zengi.

Much more work needs to be done on all sorts of aspects of the epigraphic evidence – analyses of the linguistic features of inscriptions, their grammatical constructions, their rhythms, their literary techniques, the relationship between historical and Qur'anic inscriptions. Indeed, the critical scrutiny of the choice of Qur'anic passages in these inscriptions in order to determine whether they were chosen for their specific relevance to the theme of jihad (or to related themes) has scarcely begun. Greater attention needs, moreover, to be devoted to the relationship between coins and architectural inscriptions. But such a relationship can be shown to exist.

It is to be hoped that this discussion has revealed the value of examining epigraphic evidence with more care than historians usually devote to it. Inscriptions are contemporary historical documents, very often on religious buildings, positioned at a level high enough not to be defaced but low enough to be read by the population at large. They were placed there with deliberate intent, with every word and phrase laboriously carved and full of meaning. They spoke to the present using the resonances of the past and with an eye to the future. Their relevance has remained undimmed to this very day.

Notes

1. Cf. the evidence from poets and historians cited in the Introduction to E. Sivan, *L'Islam et la Croisade* (Paris, 1968), 9–22.
2. Cf. the rousing jihad sermons of Ibn Nubata produced in the Hamdanid court. A selection of these was published by M. Canard, *Sayf al-Daula: Recueil de textes relatifs à l'emir Sayf al-Daula le Hamdanide* (Algiers, 1934). For the situation on the Central Asian frontier, cf. the evidence of recent excavations at Paykand (near Bukhara) which have brought to light some of the *ribat*s noted there by medieval geographers. The *Hudud al-'Alam* records that Paykand was a 'borough with a thousand *ribats*' (tr. V. Minorsky (London, 1970), 113).
3. Op. cit.
4. Op. cit., 23–58.
5. Y. Tabbaa, 'Monuments with a message: Propagation of Jihad under Nur al-Din (1146–1174)', in V. P. Goss (ed.), *The Meeting of Two Worlds* (Kalamazoo, 1986), 223–40.
6. N. Elisséeff, 'La titulature de Nour al-Din d'après ses inscriptions', *Bulletin des Études Orientales* 14 (1952–4), 155–96.
7. Cf. above all his *Opera Minora* (Geneva, 1978), Vol. 1, 263–518, 539–60.
8. The volume used as the basis of this article is Volume VIII, ed. Et. Combe, J. Sauvaget and G. Wiet (Cairo, 1937).
9. Sivan, for example, cites the evidence of inscriptions for only 4 per cent of the footnotes in the chapters in his book which deal with the period pre-1146.
10. E.g., *Répertoire Chronologique d'Épigraphie Arabe*, No. 2882, Vol. VIII, 49–50.
11. *RCEA*, No. 2981, Vol. VIII, 125; M. van Berchem, Op. cit., 508.
12. J. Sauvaget, 'La tombe de l'Ortokide Balak', *Ars Islamica* V/2 (1938), 207–15.
13. The tomb of Balak also bears a second Qur'anic inscription (Sura 9, verse 21):

    'Their Lord giveth them good tidings of mercy from Him, and acceptance, and Gardens where enduring pleasure will be theirs.'

    This promise of Paradise is to be found on a number of tombs in medieval Syria.
14. E. C. Dodd and S. Khairallah, *The Image of the Word: A Study of Quranic Verses in Islamic Architecture* (Beirut, 1981).
15. *RCEA*, No. 3025, Vol. VIII, 159–60.
16. *RCEA*, No. 3033, Vol. VIII, 165.
17. *RCEA*, No. 3056, Vol. VIII, 182.
18. *RCEA*, No. 3063, Vol. VIII, 188.
19. *RCEA*, No. 3111, Vol. VIII, 228–9.

20. E. Herzfeld, 'Matériaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum. Troisième partie: Syrie du Nord. Inscriptions et Monuments d'Alep', Vols 76–8 of *Mémoire – Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire* (1954–6), 188–92.
21. *RCEA*, No. 3112, Vol. VIII, 229–30.
22. For the general outlines of Zengi's career, cf. H. A. R. Gibb, 'Zengi and the fall of Edessa', in M. W. Baldwin (ed.), *A History of the Crusades* (Madison, 1969), Vol. I, 449–62.
23. Cf. Ibn al-Qalanisi, *Dhayl tarikh Dimishq*, ed. H. F. Amedroz (Leiden, 1908), 200–1; Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, ed. and tr. J. B. Chabot (Paris, 1899–1914), 217.
24. For a general account of the career of Tughtegin, cf. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1st edn, art: Tughtegin (K. V. Zettersteen); W. B. Stevenson, *The Crusaders in the East* (Cambridge, 1907), 48ff.
25. Op. cit., 42.
26. Ibid.

4

The First Crusade: The Muslim Perspective

It is an impossible task to deal in a short chapter with the impact of the First Crusade on the Islamic world. This chapter will therefore be limited to the following three aims: a brief discussion of the Arabic sources, an analysis of the state of the Islamic world around the year 1095 and some insights into the impact of the First Crusade on its direct victims, the Muslims of Syria and Palestine.

Runciman writes: 'Arabic sources, though numerous and highly important for the later crusades, give us very little assistance over the first . . . The great encyclopaedias and geographies, so popular with the Arabs, are barely concerned with these years.'[1] According to Runciman, only three works are of real value: the chronicles of Ibn al-Qalanisi, Ibn al-Athir and Kamal al-Din,[2] known more commonly amongst Orientalists as Ibn al-'Adim. With the greatest respect to Runciman, whose magnum opus has inspired many to embark on serious study of the Crusades, these statements of his require modification or downright contradiction. He is right, of course, in one sense: one looks in vain in the Islamic sources for a detailed account of the battles of the First Crusade.

This dearth of information does not, however, stem from any desire on the Muslims' part to pass over a series of ignominious defeats at the hand of the Crusaders.[3] It is, rather, a general characteristic of medieval Islamic historiography which stresses propagandistic themes, skating hazily over military details. One is forcefully reminded that most Islamic historians were by training religious scholars or administrators, not military strategists. But the worst of it is that modern Western scholarship on the Crusades must still

rely, inevitably, on the limited canon of Arabic works which *happen* to have been translated into European languages. Moreover, despite the undeniable usefulness of the *Recueil des historiens des croisades*, one should recall that the passages translated in it are only excerpts of much fuller texts personally selected by the editors and sometimes badly edited and mistranslated.

Some sources remain unexploited. An important, if fragmentary source, the chronicle of al-ʿAzimi (d. 1160), published by Claude Cahen in 1938 in Arabic handwritten form and recently published in printed form,[4] is barely cited in recent scholarship. New texts have been published. The great biographical dictionary of Ibn al-ʿAdim, the *Bughya*, has recently been published in full.[5] Some of his entries *were* included in the *Recueil* but his biography of Ridwan of Aleppo, for example, remains unexploited. *Pace* Runciman, much of interest is to be found in the Arabic encyclopedias and geographies, as for instance in the section of Ibn Shaddad's geography which deals with northern Syria.[6] There is, moreover, some useful information to be gleaned from a range of untranslated and unexploited Mamluk histories, such as those of the prolific al-Maqrizi[7] and the administrator, Ibn al-Dawadari.[8] It is also most worthwhile to read the *whole* of Ibn Taghribirdi.[9] It could be argued that these are later works, reflecting the preoccupations of the fourteenth rather than the twelfth century, but such writers draw heavily on earlier named and unnamed lost historiographical texts, and the works of the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century chroniclers certainly repay a laborious trawl, if their information is then evaluated judiciously. The extant Arabic poetry of the period of the First Crusade also remains largely unexploited.[10] Some of it, usually the same lines in each case, has been translated or summarised by Emmanuel Sivan, Francesco Gabrieli and Hadia Dajani-Shakeel, but there is more work to be done on this small yet important corpus of writing. Taken altogether, this mass of extra historical material cannot fail to give a fuller and more nuanced view than we have had so far of the composite Islamic historiographical contribution to our knowledge of the First Crusade.

It is a truism of Crusader history that the warriors of the First Crusade succeeded because of Muslim disunity and weakness. Had the First Crusade arrived even ten years earlier, it would have met strong, unified resistance from the East under Malikshah, the last of the three so-called Great Seljuq sultans. To what extent was the Islamic world bereft of unity and weakened

by a complete lack of powerful overall leadership and by religious schism? First, the issue of leadership. It has often been said that the centrifugal forces at the heart of the Seljuq government machine all worked towards the fragmentation of the once unified Seljuq empire after 1092. Thus the Crusaders found in Syria and Palestine small territorial units under the nominal suzerainty of the Seljuqs but ruled by mutually hostile Seljuq princelings and military commanders.

Seljuq weakness should be further contextualised and emphasised. In the space of less than two years, beginning in 1092, there was a total sweep of *all* the major political pieces on the Islamic chessboard from Egypt eastwards. In 1092 the greatest figure of Seljuq history, the vizier, Nizam al-Mulk, the de facto ruler of the Seljuq empire for over thirty years, was murdered. A month later, Malikshah, the third Seljuq sultan, died in suspicious circumstances, after a successful twenty-year reign, followed closely by his wife, grandson and other powerful political figures. In the ensuing turbulence, Seljuq pretenders fought fratricidal and familial struggles to gain supreme power, struggles which monopolised their energies and military resources.[11] The Muslim sources view the year 1094 as even more doom-laden, for in this year yet another era was brought to an end with the death of the Fatimid caliph of Egypt, al-Mustansir, the arch-enemy of the Seljuqs, who had ruled for fifty-eight years. His death was closely followed by that of *his* vizier, Badr al-Jamali. Also in 1094 the ʿAbbasid Sunni caliph, al-Muqtadi, died. As Ibn Taghribirdi put it: 'This year is called the year of the death of caliphs and commanders.'[12] This succession of deaths in both the key power centres of the Islamic world, the Seljuq and Fatimid empires, occurring at exactly the same time, must have had the same impact as the disintegration of the Iron Curtain in recent years: known political entities and certainties gave way to disorientation and anarchy. The timing of the First Crusade could not have been more propitious. Could one suggest that the Europeans had somehow been briefed that *this* was the perfect moment to pounce?

Religious schism was not removed by the deaths of the major political figures of the time. It permeated Islamic life at every level of society and was indeed exacerbated by the political vacuum which developed in the years 1092–4. As 'good Sunni Islamic rulers' the Seljuqs had pursued a vigorous foreign policy in the period 1063–92, the main thrust of which had been

to wage war but not against Byzantium or the Christian kingdoms of the Caucasus, although such initiatives did occur. The prime Seljuq obsession on the military front had been the 'heretical' Fatimid Shiʿite caliphate of Cairo and a protracted struggle was fought out in Syria and Palestine. The ideological and political enmity between Fatimid Ismaili Shiʿites and the Seljuq Sunnis died hard. Indeed, the Crusaders, once they were established in the Levant, would prove, for a while at least, preferable as allies for both Sunnis and Shiʿites; it was almost unthinkable to form a united Islamic front against the outside invaders, as might have been expected, for example, at the siege of Antioch. As for Jerusalem itself, in 1095 it was not the cynosure of Muslim eyes that it was to become in the build-up to its reconquest by Saladin in 1187. The concept of jihad, sharpened in the tenth and eleventh centuries on the frontiers with the nomadic Turks of Central Asia in the east and with Byzantium in the west, was flagging now, a rhetorical term rather than a politico-religious rallying-cry.[13]

The same disunity characterised other areas of the Islamic world. The Turks of Asia Minor were the first Muslim foe to be encountered by the Crusaders. The information in Muslim sources on their activities is scattered in the chronicles of the Seljuqs of Iraq and Iran and in Ayyubid and Mamluk histories written from the vantage point of Syria and Egypt. The battle of Manzikert in 1071 is usually taken as a convenient date to symbolise the beginning of a gradual but steady process by which diverse groups of nomadic Turks infiltrated the Byzantine empire, pursuing their time-honoured lifestyle of pastoralism and raiding.[14] We do not know how numerous these groups were: some were authorised to raid by the Seljuq sultans, others progressed unchecked by any allegiance, even nominal, to a supra-tribal authority. The Seljuq ruler of western Asia Minor, Qilij Arslan (ruled 1092–1107), called 'sultan' retrospectively in the sources, came from a renegade branch of the great Seljuq family, and even though he was far from Iran he was still attached emotionally to his tribal heritage in the east. In the political instability of the post-1092 period he interfered whenever possible in the affairs of the Seljuq sultanate in the east, to exploit its weakness and to gain territory for himself. This was of far greater moment to him than to contemplate campaigns across the mountains into Syria and Palestine to fight the Crusaders. Even within Asia Minor there was no semblance of overall political unity between the

disparate nomadic Turkish groups vying for territory there in the aftermath of the battle of Manzikert in 1071. The Danishmendids, who held sway in central Anatolia, between Sivas and Malatya, did, it is true, form a temporary alliance with the Seljuqs of western Anatolia for the battle of Dorylaeum (July 1097), but such alliances were always ephemeral. Any concerted Turcoman initiative into Palestine or Syria was inconceivable.[15]

As for the Fatimids of Egypt, they are portrayed most unfavourably by the great Sunni historians of the Islamic Middle Ages, for the Fatimids had begun life as a secretive, esoteric, extremist Ismaili Shiʿite sect and they had become the major enemies of the Seljuqs who presented themselves as the 'defenders of Sunni Islam'. At the time of the First Crusade, the Fatimids were experiencing difficulties. Their religious persuasion usually cut them off from alliances with neighbouring Sunni Muslim powers. Their de facto ruler, the vizier al-Afdal, chose to rule through young puppet caliphs. As already mentioned, al-Maqrizi, the great Mamluk historian, wrote a complete history of the Fatimids, *Ittiʿaz al-hunafa'*. For the period of the First Crusade it is noteworthy that he mentions that Egypt was laid low by famine and plague, in 490/1096–7 and especially in 493/1099–1100. He also stresses further religious schism with the formation of the breakaway Fatimid group, the Assassins, after al-Mustansir's death in 1094. In these difficult circumstances it is hardly surprising that the Fatimid war effort against the Crusaders was to prove less than creditable.[16]

Unfortunately, the Muslim chroniclers indicate no motivation for the Fatimids' sending out an army in 1098 to seize Jerusalem from the two Turcoman chiefs who were holding the city on behalf of the Seljuq sultan. But the most likely reason is that al-Afdal was making a pre-emptive strike. In view of Seljuq weakness and the imminent arrival of the Crusaders, al-Afdal wanted to secure again the Fatimid hold on Jerusalem. It had, after all, been in Fatimid hands for a good part of the eleventh century and they had beautified its major buildings. Between 1099 and 1107, as is well known, the Fatimids did send a number of expeditions to Palestine by way of Ascalon to fight the Crusaders. However, with one notable exception, these campaigns achieved nothing.[17]

What of the eastern perspective after 1092? The Seljuqs, and especially two sons of Malikshah, Barkyaruq and Muhammad, were locked in a pro-

tracted military conflict which lasted until Barkyaruq's death in 1105. This conflict gobbled up almost all the available military resources. It was fought out in western Iran, but its repercussions were felt in Iraq, the traditional seat of the Sunni caliph, in eastern Iran and Central Asia, and, by default, in distant Syria and Palestine, earlier a centre of Seljuq activity. Most Sunni Islamic sources try to whitewash Seljuq indifference to the loss of Jerusalem and the Syrian ports and they stress the fact that some campaigns were sent out under the auspices of the Seljuq sultan to wage jihad against the Crusaders.

An exception to this approach is the historian, Ibn al-Jawzi. Writing from the vantage-point of Baghdad, he notes as early as the year 491/1097–8, that is, *before* the fall of Jerusalem: 'There were many calls to go out and fight against the Franks and complaints multiplied in every place.'[18] He records that on the orders of the Seljuq sultan, Barkyaruq, commanders assembled: 'But then his resoluteness fizzled out.'[19] Ibn al-Jawzi also notes succinctly that after the fall of Jerusalem, when a Syrian delegation came to ask for military assistance, the sultan's army held themselves aloof, or to render the Arabic text more closely, they remained sitting on their backsides.[20]

The implications of Seljuq political weakness and lack of concern for the plight of the Muslims of Syria and Palestine were far-reaching. It has often been pointed out that it was the Turkish warriors, not the Fatimid armies, who posed a military threat to the Crusaders. Only the Seljuq armies could seriously have arrested Latin Christian expansion in the Levant. Whilst the Seljuq sultans, first Barkyaruq and then his brother Muhammad, paid lip service to the cause and sent some armies to fight the Frankish settlers in the period 1100–18, neither sultan took the field himself at the head of an army, as Alp Arslan had done at the battle of Manzikert in 1071. Neither dared to leave his power base in the east undefended. And that was the territory that counted for them, not Palestine. The fate of Jerusalem was sealed, therefore, in Isfahan. The disparate nature of the Seljuq army – composed as it was of the standing troops, provincial contingents under local commanders, and groups of nomadic Turcomans organised on tribal lines – necessitated strong military leadership, epitomised in the figure of the sultan. Otherwise, and this often proved the case, there was dissension and defection and the Turcomans would disappear as soon as they had been paid.

Philip Hitti speaks of the Crusaders as 'a strange and unexpected enemy'.[21] This is an apt description of the initial reaction of the Muslims most in the firing line of the First Crusade. Just as, a little more than a century later, the essentially alien Mongols would strike the Islamic world like a thunderbolt, this time from the east, so too, as the First Crusade unfolded, waves of fear, shock and incomprehension spread from the areas most affected across the whole Islamic world. But the impact of the catastrophe diminished the further afield the news of it spread. The waves became ripples. There was confusion in Baghdad about the identity of the enemy: al-Abiwardi, the Seljuq poet, writing a lament after the fall of Jerusalem, calls the malefactors *al-Rum*, the usual Arabic term for the Byzantines,[22] and Ibn Shaddad also confuses Byzantines and Franks in his geography of northern Syria.[23] This is not surprising, since the Muslims' centuries-old struggle with their close neighbours, Byzantium, had been waged in the very same frontier areas now penetrated by the Crusaders.

Nor is this the only evidence that the Muslim world as a whole failed to grasp what was happening. It is especially noticeable that the Islamic sources, with a few exceptions, notably Ibn al-Athir,[24] do not evince any curiosity as to the motivation for the Latin Christian presence in Muslim territory. The correlation of the concepts of crusade/jihad never crosses the mind of the medieval Muslim chronicler. Crusader activities are narrated as an inevitable fact of life in the Muslim context from the First Crusade onwards, but occasion little or no special comment or digression. There is no sense that the Crusaders are an unusual kind of enemy, with a fundamentally new agenda.

Thus, under the year 489/1095–6, al-'Azimi writes laconically: 'The Franks came out from their country and Saturn was in Virgo . . . Alexius, the Byzantine emperor, wrote to the Muslims, informing them of the appearance of the Franks.'[25] However, even in this brief entry the author manages to intimate foreboding and alarm to those of his readership acquainted with astrology. As the Muslim encyclopedist, al-Qazwini, was to write: 'The astrologers call Saturn the largest star of misfortune . . . and they ascribe to it devastation, ruin, grief and cares.'[26] One is left, moreover, to speculate on the motive of the Byzantine emperor (was the letter sent out of solicitude or was it a threat?) and on the identity of the group of the Muslims to whom it was addressed. The Fatimids seem to be the most likely target, but this is not overtly expressed.

Two contemporary sources exist. Sivan made extensive use of a work entitled the *Kitab al-jihad* written in the early years of the twelfth century by a Damascene legal scholar and preacher, al-Sulami. The two extant manuscripts of this text, both housed in a Damascus library, contain only small sections of a much longer original work. Given the crucial dating of this work, it is certainly time for an edition and translation of the complete text of the manuscripts; Sivan published and translated only selected excerpts of those sections which did survive. According to his summary of the contents, this work records the views of one contemporary religious scholar on the impact of the coming of the Franks, warning the Muslims of the dangers of military inactivity and pointing out that the Franks are aiming at seizing the Syrian ports and that the Muslims must rise in defensive jihad against them.[27] The other extant contemporary Islamic source which reveals the Muslim reaction to the First Crusade is a group of poems, by al-Abiwardi (died 1113), Ibn al-Khayyat (who died in the 1120s) and an unnamed third poet. Gabrieli has already translated part of al-Abiwardi's lament on the loss of Jerusalem; so this chapter will concentrate on some so far untranslated texts of the other two poets.

The anonymous poet's lines are powerful even within the conventions of Arabic poetry, which is a highly conservative genre. The panegyric ode, normally addressed by the poet to his patron, is here, after the catastrophes of the First Crusade, transformed into an eloquent diatribe against the Muslims who have allowed these disasters to occur. These lines were, of course, intended to be declaimed publicly:

> The unbelief of the infidels has declared it lawful to inflict harm on
> Islam, causing prolonged lamentation for the faith.
> What is right is null and void and what is forbidden is [now] made licit.
> The sword is cutting and blood is spilt.
> How many Muslim men have become booty [*salib*]?
> And how many Muslim women's inviolability has been plundered [*salib*]?
> How many a mosque have they made into a church!
> The cross [*salib*] has been set up in the *mihrab*.
> The blood of the pig is suitable for it.
> Qur'ans have been burned under the guise of incense.

> Do you not owe an obligation to God and Islam,
> Defending thereby young men and old?
> Respond to God: woe on you! Respond![28]

The stereotypical images of the Crusaders, who are portrayed as infidels, pork-lovers, rapists and despoilers of all that Islam holds sacred, are noteworthy; and there is much emphasis on the wordplay between *salib* (cross) and *salib* (plunder).

The poet Ibn al-Khayyat, who had served the rulers of Tripoli before the First Crusade, is equally forceful in an ode addressed to his patron, ‘Adb al-Dawla, one of the commanders in Damascus, in his attempt to revive the flagging spirit of jihad in the early years of the twelfth century.[29] As Sivan merely summarised some of this fifty-five-line ode,[30] the following gives a fuller flavour of it:

> The polytheists [*mushrikun*] have swelled in a torrent of terrifying extent.
> How long will this continue?
> Armies like mountains, coming again and again, have raged forth from the land of the Franks.

Ibn al-Khayyat then alludes to the mutual rancour of the Muslim princes and to the Franks' ability to buy them off, before reaching the climax of his ode:

> The tribe of polytheism do not reject [any kind] of corruption.
> Nor do they recognise any moderation in tyranny . . .
> How many young girls have begun to beat their throats and necks out of fear of them [the Franks]?
> How many nubile girls have not known the heat [of the day] nor felt the cold at night [until now]?
> They are almost wasting away with fear and dying of grief and agitation.

The choice of imagery is apposite: the Arabic root *nahara* means ‘to cut the throat of an animal for slaughter' but is here applied to that most sacred pillar of Islamic society, the sanctity of the womenfolk. So the poet continues:

> Defend your religion and your *harim*, not counting death as a loss!
> Block the frontiers by the piercing of throats!

> The heads of the polytheists have already ripened,
> So do not neglect them as a vintage and a harvest!

Finally the poet turns to the great hero of Manzikert as a role model for the Muslim warriors fighting the Franks:

> For in like circumstances Alp Arslan sallied forth, sharper-edged than the sword.

Sadly for the Muslims this eloquence went unheeded for several decades.

This chapter has first tried to suggest that the scholarship of Western Crusader historians on the Muslim dimensions of their subject suffers from an over-reliance on a small and over-exploited body of translated source material which is itself excerpted from much longer works. There exists in fact a much larger body of relevant material than was suspected forty years ago. It is for Islamic historians to make these sources more readily available. They may add little enough to current knowledge about the Crusaders themselves, but they will certainly reveal a lot more about their Muslim enemy. Second, the preceding discussion has emphasised that the years 1092–4 were utterly catastrophic for the Muslim world from Egypt to Afghanistan, for death removed literally all the major political figures from the scene. And many of them were seasoned, formidable leaders. They left behind them a total political vacuum. Third, it has been shown that Syria and Palestine were sacrificed on the altar of Realpolitik by the Seljuqs, who alone had the right kind of military capacity to save these territories, but who were too obsessed with their own power squabbles in Iran to take a global view of this unheralded invasion over a thousand miles away.

Notes

1. S. Runciman, *History of the Crusades*, *Vol. I: The First Crusade and the Foundation of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge, 1954), 333.
2. Ibid., 333–4.
3. The medieval Muslim accounts of glorious victories, such as Manzikert or Hattin, are also vague on details of the course of the actual battles.
4. C. Cahen, 'La chronique abrégée d'al-'Azimi', *Journal Asiatique* 230 (1938), 353–448; ed. I. Za'rur, *Tarikh Halab* (Damascus, 1984).

5. Ibn al-'Adim, *Bughyat al-talab fi tarikh Halab*, ed. S. Zakkar, 11 vols (Beirut, 1988).
6. Ibn Shaddad, *Description de la Syrie du Nord*, tr. A.-M. Eddé-Terrasse (Damascus, 1984).
7. Most notable in this context is the work of al-Maqrizi which is devoted to the history of the Fatimids, the *Itti'az al-hunafa'*, ed. J. al-Shayyal (Cairo, 1948). Also worthy of mention is his massive biographical dictionary, the *Kitab al-muqaffa' al-kabir*, ed. M. al-Ya'lawi, 8 vols (Beirut, 1990).
8. Ibn al-Dawadari, *Die Chronik des Ibn al-Dawadari*, vol. 6, ed. S. Munağabgğid (Cairo, 1961).
9. Although the *Recueil* provides translated excerpts from the history of Ibn Taghribirdi, this historian's contribution is much more extensive. Cf. Ibn Taghribirdi, *Nujum al-zahira*, vol. 5 (Cairo, ta1939).
10. Cf. the lines of an anonymous poet quoted by Ibn Taghribirdi (op. cit., 151–2) and discussed by H. Dajani-Shakeel, 'Jihad in twelfth-century Arabic poetry', *The Muslim World* 66 (1976), 96–113; the ode of al-Abiwardi quoted by Ibn al-Jawzi, *Al-Muntazam* (Hyderabad, 1940), vol. 9, 108, and by Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, ed. C. J. Tornberg (Leiden and Uppsala, 1851–76), X, 284–5, and partly translated by F. Gabrieli, *Arab Historians of the Crusades* (London, 1969), 12; and the poems of Ibn al-Khayyat, *Diwan* (Damascus, 1958), 184–6. The importance of this poetry is discussed by E. Sivan, *L'Islam et la Croisade* (Paris, 1968).
11. For a recent treatment of this topic, cf. C. Hillenbrand, '1092: a murderous year', in the *Proceedings of the 14th Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants*, vol. II (Budapest, 1995), 281–97.
12. Ibn Taghribirdi, op. cit., p. 139.
13. In the tenth and eleventh centuries, a major area for jihad was the eastern border with Central Asia, where regular campaigns were conducted against the pagan Turks. This is widely attested in the works of medieval Islamic geographers and historians who speak about the popularity of frontier forts (*ribat*s) for housing jihad warriors; cf. R. Frye, *The History of Bukhara* (Cambridge, MA, 1954), 18 and n. 92. Archaeological evidence in the form of unprecedentedly large numbers of frontier forts in Central Asia testifies to the veracity of the written accounts; cf. R. Hillenbrand, *Islamic architecture* (Edinburgh, 1994), 340–1, and S. Tolstov, *Auf den Spuren der altchoresmischen Kultur* (Berlin, 1953).

   As for the Muslim–Byzantine border, it became famous in the tenth century because of the jihad activities of the Hamdanid dynasty (ruled 905–1004) in the

Jazira and Syria. This milieu produced the famous, though little studied, jihad sermons of Ibn Nubata (d. 984) of Mayyafariqin; cf. *Sayf al Daula: Recueil de textes relatifs à l'emir Sayf al Daula le Hamdanide*, ed. M. Canard (Algiers, 1934).

14. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, art: Malazgird.
15. Ibid., art: Kilidj Arslan.
16. Al-Maqrizi, op. cit., 283–4.
17. S. Lane-Poole, *A History of Egypt in the Middle Ages* (London, 1914), 164–5.
18. Ibn al-Jawzi, op. cit., 105.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., 108.
21. P. K. Hitti, *History of Syria* (London, 1951), 589.
22. *Apud* Ibn al-Athir, op. cit., 284–5.
23. Ibn Shaddad, op. cit., 270. When referring to a place called Artah in the 1060s, Ibn Shaddad mentions twice that it was in the hands of the Franks (instead of the Byzantines).
24. Ibn al-Athir, op. cit., 195.
25. Al-'Azimi (Cahen), op. cit., 371.
26. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1st edn, art: Zuhal.
27. Op. cit., 30–2. In his original pioneering article on al-Sulami ('La genèse de la contre-Croisade: un traité damasquin du début du XIIe siècle', *Journal Asiatique* 254 (1966), 197–224), Sivan says that he has produced an edition of the 'texte original des passages essentiels de l'introduction, accompagné d'une traduction' (ibid., 198).
28. Ibn Taghribirdi, op. cit., 151–2.
29. Ibn al-Khayyat, op. cit., 184–6.
30. Sivan, op. cit., 32.

5

'Abominable Acts': The Career of Zengi

While there have been many biographies of Saladin and some scholarly interest in other Muslim leaders at the time of the Crusades, such as the Mamluk sultan Baybars, it remains true that, for the most part, the Muslim princes who opposed the Crusaders are still little more than names, shadowy figures, whose personalities have yet to be delineated. In particular, the character and career of Zengi, the conqueror of Edessa, and even of his more illustrious son Nur al-Din, have not received the attention they deserve.[1] Yet Zengi's role in the Crusader–Muslim conflict is pivotal and an understanding of it sheds important light on the Islamic background to the Second Crusade. In recent years significant research has been published on Syria in the period of Zengi's career, notably by the German scholars Hoch[2] and Köhler.[3] In the particular context of this chapter, Hoch's very detailed account of the role of Damascus in Zengi's expansionist aims in Syria is significant. Moreover, Köhler's documenting of the shifting alliances in this period between Crusaders and Muslims which played a sizeable role in containing the threat posed by Zengi in Syria should also be borne in mind. This chapter draws on the findings of this research, but it also aims to see Zengi's career in a more 'global' Islamic context. This context, described on the basis of a wider range of Islamic sources, will, it is hoped, help to explain Zengi's piecemeal and only intermittent involvement in Syrian and Crusader affairs, contrasting sharply with the subsequent conduct of his son Nur al-Din who firmly concentrated his activities in Syria.

It is worth reflecting a little on the milieu in which Zengi grew up and on the key influences on his early life; indeed the sources offer some revealing

clues as to the family and environmental factors which moulded him. First of all, there was his father. Aq Sunqur played a major role in the politics of the Seljuq state and enjoyed a remarkably close relationship with Sultan Malikshah and his entourage. The sources dwell on Aq Sunqur's qualities of cruelty and ruthlessness as well as his tough but just government. Ibn al-'Adim, who wrote in Aleppo in the mid-thirteenth century, mentions that even when taken prisoner by Tutush, the Seljuq prince who ruled Aleppo and Damascus from 1078 to 1095, Aq Sunqur retained something of his imposing manner.[4] It is important to stress the unusual closeness of the bond between Zengi's father and the inner circle of the Seljuq state. The crucial detail here is that Aq Sunqur's wife is mentioned as having been the wet-nurse of Malikshah.[5] Whether she was Zengi's mother it is impossible to tell, but that is unlikely in view of the fact that Malikshah was born in 1055 and Zengi around 1084–5. She cannot have been aged less than forty-five at the time of Zengi's birth. Nevertheless, in Islamic and tribal society the women who suckled royal princes were highly valued, and Zengi's father was singularly fortunate in this choice of wife for him. Moreover, when Aq Sunqur backed Barkyaruq for the sultanate after 1092 he lost his life when he fell into the hands of Tutush. His son, Zengi, however, lived to enjoy the favour of those close to Barkyaruq and of other relatives of Malikshah who would have remembered Aq Sunqur's services to their family. Indeed, Zengi, bereft of his father's support, was not without protectors and patrons precisely because of his father's high reputation for loyalty and his close relationship with the Seljuq elite.

Zengi's father was, like Macbeth, 'in blood steeped' – not just in war, in the exercise of government and in the punishment of malefactors, but in his relationship with his own immediate family. Ibn al-'Adim, retelling an account given by al-'Azimi (who wrote in Aleppo in the 1150s), chooses to include in his obituary of Aq Sunqur a chilling story about the death of Aq Sunqur's own wife in the city in 481/1088–9. Aq Sunqur is recorded as having accompanied the bier of his wife, the 'princess, the wet-nurse of Abu'l-Fath' (Malikshah) out of the city. Rumour had it that Aq Sunqur 'was sitting with a knife in his hand. He directed it at her and she fell down dead. He was not deliberately aiming it at her. She died at once'.[6] Ibn al-'Adim makes no comment on this sorry tale. As already mentioned, in view of the

chronology it does not seem likely that this woman was Zengi's own mother; but she could have been. At all events, such an atmosphere of violence, even within his own family, from an early age must have inured Zengi to the shedding of blood and to the strategies needed to remain alive. This is indeed a far cry from the chronologically impossible but romantic legend mentioned in passing by Runciman, according to which Ida, the Dowager Margravine of Austria, one of the great beauties of her day, sought the excitement of a crusade after the first flush of youth and who, ending her days as a captive in a distant harem, gave birth to Zengi.[7]

One would like to know more about what happened to Zengi between his loss of his father when he was a child of only ten and his appointment as governor of southern Iraq at the age of about thirty-eight. These were his formative years, and details pass largely unrecorded by the chroniclers. Ibn al-Athir (d. 1233), who wrote a 'universal history' as well as a chronicle of the Zengid family, gives some information about Zengi's early career. He served in the armies of powerful Turkish commanders. In 502/1108–9 Zengi was fighting in the army of Jawali Saqao,[8] the governor of Mosul, against Tancred of Antioch.[9] In 508/1114–15 he was in the service of another governor of Mosul, Aq Sunqur al-Bursuqi,[10] and in 512/1118–19 he was with the Seljuq prince Mas'ud.[11]

The future conqueror of Edessa, Zengi, was brought up in a hard school. Indeed, to rise to prominence among the Turkish commanders and Seljuq princes, especially in the highly volatile period after 1092 (a momentous year in which both the Seljuq sultan Malikshah and his powerful chief minister Nizam al-Mulk died), was a sure sign that Zengi possessed the key qualities of intelligence and total ruthlessness, and more than the usual degree of good luck. This was especially important in his case, since he had lost his father at an early age; but the wielding of power and the ability to survive in high office were already in his blood. His father Aq Sunqur[12] (White Falcon) had been a *mamluk* of the Seljuq sultan Alp Arslan (Heroic Lion; d. 1072) and was brought up with Alp Arslan's son and heir Malikshah whose name and title no doubt designedly conjoined the traditional designations for royalty of the Arabs and Persians.[13] This personal link with the Seljuq sultan is of crucial importance not only in assessing the career of Aq Sunqur himself but in the career of his son Zengi. In adult life Aq Sunqur continued to enjoy Seljuq

favour: he became one of Malikshah's greatest commanders and, according to Ibn al-'Adim, was given the governorship of Aleppo and its dependencies by Malikshah at the beginning of 480/1087–8.[14] The Islamic sources stress that Aq Sunqur ruled with justice and make particular mention of his fierce treatment of malefactors whom he ordered on occasion to be crucified at the gates of the city.[15]

In the bloody aftermath of Malikshah's death in 1092, however, Aq Sunqur's career unravelled. True, perhaps, to loyalties forged in his boyhood, in 487/1094 he backed Malikshah's son Barkyaruq, who was one of several contenders for the Seljuq sultanate. But Aq Sunqur fell into the hands of one of Barkyaruq's rivals, Tutush, and paid for his loyalty with his life.[16] According to one source, Zengi was born around 477/1084–5; at the time of his father's death, then, Zengi was around ten.[17] He was his father's only surviving son. In the event Barkyaruq emerged victorious from the succession disputes and ruled as great sultan until 498/1105. After his father Aq Sunqur's death, his military entourage clustered around Zengi.[18] One of Malikshah's *mamluk*s, Jekermish the governor of Mosul, adopted Zengi as a son until his death in 500/1107 and supervised his upbringing. As already mentioned, subsequent governors of Mosul employed Zengi in their service.[19] Thus Zengi's early career centred on that city.

At its height the Seljuq empire stretched from Central Asia to Anatolia and included parts of Syria and Palestine. Even after 1092, Seljuq princes, Seljuq military commanders supported by their own *mamluk* contingents, and Turcoman nomadic chiefs with their tribal followers were actively engaged in the affairs of individual cities and provinces in widely divergent areas, and were accustomed to covering vast distances in search of pasturage and territory. In the Levant during the early decades of the twelfth century, after the arrival of the Crusaders and the beginnings of Assassin activity in this area, it was very common for townspeople to summon military help from a Seljuq commander or Turcoman chief, in the hope that such a man would defend them against the new enemies. However unwelcome such a Turkish presence might be to the cities of Syria, the urban notables who administered the city's affairs would hope to work out a modus vivendi with them. They acted on the principle that any military protector was better than none.

Within the specific context of Syria, another pattern of behaviour should be mentioned here. From the early decades of the twelfth century onwards, local Syrian rulers, both Muslim and Frank, were accustomed to making common cause in the face of an external threat to their own territorial autonomy.[20] This highly localised Syrian solidarity impeded attempts by Muslim rulers from the East to build up a power base which included Syria and thus to create a unified state encircling the Franks. This tendency proved to be a major obstacle to Zengi whose main centre of power was Mosul and northern Iraq but who was to go some considerable way towards creating a much larger empire for himself. Even so, the conquest of Damascus and the unification of Syria eluded him. The time was not yet right. There was not as yet a widespread desire for Muslim political unity against the Franks.

Much of Zengi's early activity centred on the areas of the Seljuq empire east of the Euphrates, and especially Mosul and Baghdad. He never focused exclusively on Syria as his power base but was gradually drawn into Levantine affairs as his ambitions and territories grew. In 516/1122–23 the Seljuq sultan Mahmud gave Zengi, then in his late thirties, his first important position, that of military governor (*shihna*) of Basra and Wasit.[21] The possession of these particular cities gave Zengi already at this stage control of much of southern Iraq, a vast power base. Shortly afterwards, in 521/1127, he was appointed *shihna* of Baghdad,[22] an important post which involved close supervision of the caliph's activities to ensure that he kept within the bounds of conduct deemed appropriate by the sultan, to whom the *shihna* reported directly. The caliph, in the view of the Seljuq elite, should confine himself to the role of religious figurehead. They aimed, above all, at preventing the caliph from taking up arms and forming yet another focus of power in such unstable times.[23] In the same year Zengi was appointed governor of Mosul in northern Iraq.[24] The Seljuq sultan Mahmud entrusted the upbringing of two of his sons (Alp Arslan and Farrukhshah, neither of whom succeeded him) to Zengi; hence the title *atabeg* (tutor) which was traditionally attached to Zengi's names.[25]

Zengi did not, however, confine his activities to Iraq. Another area of interest to him in his territorial ambitions was the northern Jazira (the area between the upper Euphrates and upper Tigris rivers) where the Artuqid Turcoman chiefs had managed to carve out small principalities for themselves in the first decade of the twelfth century. Zengi began to raid

Artuqid territory in 524/1129–30 and returned there in subsequent years.[26] In 528/1133–4, he attacked Hisn Kayfa, making an unsuccessful attempt to take Amid, but seizing a number of Kurdish citadels in the area.[27] Thus began Zengi's relationship with the Turcomans of the Jazira who lived in fear and trembling of his visitations and who were destined to be his vassals. Indeed, they provided manpower for his campaigns whenever he demanded it.[28] Zengi's son Nur al-Din, and Saladin thereafter, were to follow the same practice of subjugating the Turcomans of the Jazira in order to be able to draw on them for reinforcements in the jihad against the Franks.

Zengi began to interest himself actively in Syria after the death in 522/1128 of Tughtegin, the powerful local ruler of Damascus, who had governed the city since 1104.[29] The loss of this strong rule favoured Zengi's expansionist aims. Zengi's first crossing of the Euphrates and intervention in Syrian affairs in his own right seem to have occurred in the month of Jumada II 522/June 1128 when he took possession of Aleppo.[30] He secured control of the city, allied himself to the ruling Seljuq family there by marrying the granddaughter of that same Tutush who had executed his father Aq Sunqur, and received retrospective recognition of his possessions in Syria from the Seljuq sultan Mahmud.[31] As usual, he returned to Mosul, which by this time had become his permanent base. As to why Zengi should have singled out Aleppo for attack in his first incursion into Syria, it may be worth noting that his father had been appointed governor of that city by Sultan Malikshah and had ruled it for eight years (479/1086–487/1094). Thus for eight of his first ten years Zengi had presumably lived there, and these memories – as well, perhaps, as a desire to repossess himself of his patrimony – might have induced him to target Aleppo on this occasion.

Zengi returned to Syria two years later, revisiting Aleppo, before turning his attention to Hims and Hama in central Syria; in the eleventh century these towns had usually been under the suzerainty of the rulers of Damascus or Aleppo. Zengi took Hama but prosecuted an unsuccessful siege against Hims.[32] His expedition ended abruptly when he rushed back to Mosul to become embroiled in a bitter struggle with the increasingly independent-minded Caliph al-Mustarshid.[33]

The internal political instability of Damascus after Tughtegin's death is well recognised in the Islamic sources.[34] In his account of the year 523/1129,

al-ʻAzimi records that the Franks had ʻheard about the weakness of Damascus and encamped there and besieged it in large numbers'.[35] Zengi's first independent involvement with Damascus came in 529/1135.[36] Zengi was invited by the associates of the Burid ruler of the city, Isma'il, the grandson of Tughtegin, to come and take the city because they were weary of Isma'il's tyrannical government. If Zengi did not come, they would hand over the city to the Franks. When news of Isma'il's action became known, he was murdered at the instigation of the military and civil elite of the city, notably Mu'in al-Din Unur, the *mamluk* of Tughtegin. When Zengi did come and besiege Damascus, he encountered resistance from Unur, by then the de facto ruler of the city, and left.

Events in the east held Zengi's attention for the next two years and two insubordinate caliphs, al-Mustarshid and al-Rashid, were disposed of in suspicious circumstances.[37] However, Zengi returned to Syria in the spring of 531/1137. Having laid siege to Hims, he moved on Barin, a Frankish possession, and defeated a Christian force there.[38] He also captured Ma'arrat an-Nu'man and Kafartab from the Franks.[39] In the autumn of 1137 Zengi advanced into southern Syria and conducted a campaign into the Biqa' Valley. He was then recognised as overlord by the governor of Banyas which had been under the control of Damascus: this was an important development since it gave Zengi a bridgehead in southern Syria close to Damascus. On his way north at the end of that year Zengi tried again to take Hims, since it threatened his access to southern Syria.[40] The Franks appealed to Byzantium for help, and this resulted in Emperor John II Comnenus coming to the lands of Islam in the spring of 1138[41] and laying siege to Aleppo and Shayzar. According to Ibn Wasil (d. 1298), Zengi tried to sow discord between the Franks of Syria and the Byzantines; in any event, the Byzantine emperor returned to his country, frustrated in his aims.[42]

In 533/1138 Zengi came back to Aleppo, successfully routed a joint Byzantine–Frankish force and took possession of Atharib.[43] Zengi was assisted on this occasion by Damascene troops. He then entered into negotiations with Damascus to obtain suzerainty over Homs. A marriage alliance was drawn up: Zengi married Zumurrud Khatun, the mother of the Burid ruler of Damascus, Shihab al-Din Mahmud, and he gained possession of Hims.[44] Zengi returned to Syria in 534/1139 and took Baalbek by siege in

the month of Safar/October.[45] He then moved on Damascus.[46] Zengi and his army moved closer and closer to Damascus, but the city's ruler, Jamal al-Din Muhammad, still refused to hand it over. In December Zengi tried to persuade Jamal al-Din Muhammad to surrender Damascus in exchange for another Syrian city. According to the contemporary testimony of the local chronicler Ibn al-Qalanisi, Jamal al-Din Muhammad was willing to accept this offer, but the city's notables held out against it,[47] so strong was the local resistance to the idea of being ruled by Zengi. When Jamal al-Din Muhammad died in March 1140, Zengi moved once again against Damascus, but he still found no support from within the city. Instead, Unur, the de facto leader in Damascus, preferred a local coalition with the Franks to surrendering the city to Zengi, and accordingly he wrote to the Christians asking them for help: 'He made them afraid that if he [Zengi] took Damascus he would take Jerusalem and the coast.'[48] Zengi withdrew in Shawwal 534/June 1140 but the Frankish–Damascene coalition was duly established.[49]

Zengi subsequently became distracted from Syria again by his continuing involvement in the affairs of Iraq – a dispute arose between him and the Seljuq sultan Mas'ud[50] – and in the Jazira.[51] The fact that Zengi continually returned to Iraq at the end of his campaigns in Syria and the northern Jazira sheds much light on the nature of his career and his ambitions. It clearly marks these campaigns as forays or excursions. After all, he had grown up in the orbit of the court of the Great Seljuqs, whose power base was Iran. To ignore the eastward pull which the Seljuqs of Iraq exerted in early twelfth-century politics in the Middle East would be to misunderstand the realities of the time, because that dynasty, although strife-ridden, still remained the major power between the Levantine coast and Afghanistan. Zengi was the most able of their henchmen in the west, but he would never have been in any doubt that the centre of real power lay in Iran. It therefore made sense to establish his base in neighbouring Iraq; and perhaps he chose Mosul in the north because it offered equally swift access to Baghdad in the south, Syria in the west and the rest of the Jazira in the north. Moreover, he had to deal with three successive caliphs – al-Mustarshid, al-Rashid and al-Muqtafi – who were all striving, whether overtly or covertly, to assert their independence of the Seljuq sultan and the commanders or governors to whom he delegated power and who often aspired to establish their own independent

principalities. These circumstances severely limited Zengi's capacity to assert himself in the Levant. For him to have done that successfully he would have had to establish his main base in Syria.

Zengi's victory at Edessa has caused him to be viewed by posterity as the first important protagonist on the Muslim side against the Franks; indeed, the fall of Edessa prompted the Second Crusade. How long Zengi had had Edessa within his sights it is impossible to tell from the sources. In later years, his major preoccupation seems to have been the conquest of Damascus and with it the prospect of dominating the Near East. However, it is only with the benefit of hindsight that thirteenth-century Muslim historians interpret his opportunistic seizing of Edessa as a deliberate strategy. Ibn al-'Adim remarks: 'Atabeg Zengi kept on thinking about conquering Edessa.'[52] Zengi's involvement in the affairs of the Jazira just before he captured Edessa is presented in the Islamic sources as a deliberate ploy to create a false sense of security among the Franks. If that had indeed been his strategy, it proved successful, for Joscelin, who ruled Edessa and neighbouring areas, felt able to leave the city and cross the Euphrates to visit his western territories.[53] Informed by his spies that Edessa now lay weakened by Joscelin's absence, Zengi moved towards it in Jumada I 539/December 1144. He captured the city in the second half of Jumada II after a siege of twenty-eight days.[54] After initial pillaging, Zengi restored order to the city and he ensured that its defences remained intact. He then took possession of all the Frankish lands east of the Euphrates except al-Bira.[55] A Frankish army assembled at Antioch for the relief of Edessa was defeated by Zengi's troops in February or March 1145.[56] The caliph al-Muqtafi gave Zengi a string of honorific titles in recognition of his victory at Edessa – 'the adornment of Islam, the victorious prince, the helper of the believers'.[57]

In the eyes of those who came after him, Zengi was remembered in the Muslim sources only for his capture of Edessa. Even those chroniclers who dwell on Zengi's despotic qualities are prepared to forget them because of Edessa – all his misdeeds are pardoned in the Muslim corporate memory by this one glorious act. Ibn al-Athir records the following story:

> A pious man dreamt that he saw Zengi in the best (possible) condition. I [the pious man] said to him: 'What did God do with you?' He said: 'He

> pardoned me.' I said: 'Because of what?' He said: 'Because of the conquest of Edessa.'[58]

The Arab chroniclers enthusiastically record the boost in morale which the Muslims of Syria experienced with the fall of Edessa, but they are also aware of Edessa's strategic importance. Ibn al-Athir points out that the Frankish hold on Edessa had harmed the Muslims and that 'it was the eye of the Jazira and the fortress of the Muslim lands'.[59] These chroniclers are, of course, writing with hindsight and full knowledge of the later developments in the wars with the Franks. They are therefore well placed to appreciate the strategic significance of the fall of Edessa, which was the first major calamity with lasting consequences to befall the Franks in the Near East. But it is quite another matter to attribute to Zengi the foresight to strike the Franks a blow at this particularly damaging time and place. It is perhaps more likely that Zengi had a tactical rather than a strategic coup in mind.

Despite Zengi's advanced age at this stage, there is no mention in the Islamic sources of his suffering from any physical frailty. He died – aged about sixty-two – as he had lived: violently and in an atmosphere of treachery and conspiracy. According to the Islamic accounts, Zengi was murdered in his bed in Rabi' II 541/September 1146 by one of his slaves (or soldiers, according to one version) during his siege of Qal'at Ja'bar on the Euphrates.[60]

How Zengi's sudden murder could have occurred when he had built up such an apparently impregnable defence around himself and possessed such a highly efficient espionage service remains unclear. Without this unusually effective security system he would not have been able to stay in power for as long as he had. Some sources accuse him of having drunk wine on the night that he died.[61] According to the Arab chroniclers, who often enjoy an opportunity to look down upon the mores of the Turks, inebriation was very common among the Turkish rulers.[62] The Islamic accounts do not state explicitly who had instigated Zengi's killing, although the finger of suspicion points much more convincingly at Damascus than at the Franks.[63] At any rate, Zengi was killed after the fall of Edessa, and at the very peak of his power and prestige, and there were many who would have wished to check any further expansion on his part. According to Ibn al-'Adim, in the year before his death Zengi ordered the manufacture of mangonels and war machines.

He gave the impression that these were for use in the jihad, but 'some people thought that he was intending to attack Damascus'.[64] Ibn al-Qalanisi, the local chronicler of Damascus, an eyewitness, remarks: 'Stories were circulated about him to the effect that he would probably march out into the territories of Damascus and besiege the city.'[65]

According to Ibn Wasil, Zengi was 'good-looking, brown-skinned, with beautiful eyes. Old age had turned his hair grey . . . He was harsh, resolute, courageous, perspicacious, bold, ambitious and proud'.[66] The sources do not explain the meaning of Zengi, the name by which he was widely known. It is not a nickname, for it occurs once in his official titulature as recorded in monumental inscriptions.[67] A possible etymology would be from the Persian *zang* (rust); it is conceivable that he was given the epithet Zengi meaning rust-coloured because of the colour of his skin.[68]

The chroniclers emphasise Zengi's chilling cruelty. In an incident in 528/1134 Usama b. Munqidh, who worked for Zengi for a while, mentions that he cut off the thumbs of nine arbalesters (crossbowmen) who had defended the castle of al-Sur in the Jazira.[69] During Zengi's second attempt to take Damascus by siege in 529/1135, the citizens were, according to the account of Ibn al-Qalanisi, 'afraid for their own destruction . . . knowing as they did what the conduct of Zengi would be if he should capture the city'.[70] Ibn Wasil relates a similar instance of Zengi's treatment of prisoners who had the misfortune to fall into his hands; he mentions that Zengi killed a number of Byzantines and Franks in 533/1138: 'The heads of the slain were collected and a minaret was built from them from which the call to prayer was made.'[71] In 534/1139, after Zengi had promised the people of Baalbek that he would grant them safe conduct and they had surrendered the citadel to him on that basis, he 'tortured and crucified them. The people found that repugnant on his part'.[72]

Zengi was also violent and brutal to those in his immediate entourage. 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani, Saladin's adviser, comments on Zengi's treatment of his military commanders and other subordinates as follows:

> When he was unhappy with an amir, he would kill him or banish him and leave that individual's children alive but castrate them. Whenever one of his pages pleased him by his beauty he would treat him in the same way so that the characteristics of youth would last longer in him.[73]

A local historian of Aleppo, Ibn Abi Tayyi', whose chronicle survives only as excerpts in later writings, tells the following tale of Zengi's ferocity and lust for vengeance:

> In 524 [1129–30] Zengi married Zumurrud Khatun [the 'Emerald Princess'], the daughter of Ridwan of Aleppo. A month later, he divorced her when he saw traces of old blood on a bench and was told that these were the stains of his murdered father's blood.

Zengi's father, it should be recalled, had been killed by Zumurrud Khatun's grandfather Tutush. The account of Ibn Abi Tayyi' continues: 'In a drunken stupor on the balcony overlooking Aleppo, Zengi summoned Zumurrud, divorced her and ordered her to be taken to the stable where he ordered the grooms to rape her. This they did while he looked on.'[74]

The Islamic sources mention several instances of Zengi's breaking his word and acting treacherously. At Hama in 524/1130 Zengi behaved treacherously towards Khirkhan the ruler of the town: having promised safe conduct, he tied Khirkhan to sacks of straw and punished and inflicted various kinds of torture on him.[75] About Zengi's treachery at Baalbek in 534/1139, Ibn al-'Adim does not mince his words: 'He had sworn to the people of the citadel with strong oaths and on the Qur'an and divorcing [his wives]. When they came down from the citadel he betrayed them, flayed its governor and hanged the rest.'[76]

Fear is a word frequently associated with Zengi in the Islamic sources. Saladin's companion and adviser 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani, known for his rhetorical skills in praising his master, launches into an invective against Zengi of a violence he normally reserves for the Franks:

> He [Zengi] was tyrannical and he would strike with indiscriminate recklessness. He was like a leopard in character, like a lion in fury, not renouncing any severity, not knowing any kindness . . . He was feared for his sudden attacking; shunned for his roughness; aggressive, insolent, death to enemies and citizens.[77]

According to Ibn Wasil, one man fell dead of fright at the mere sight of Zengi.[78] His reputation spread far and wide: 'Princes feared him, border lords were frightened at the very mention of him.'[79] Zengi's territories bordered on

those of many adversaries of his, both Muslim and Christian – the caliph, the sultan, the Turcoman rulers of the Jazira, the Franks and the ruler of Damascus. Despite being surrounded by them, Zengi managed to juggle such neighbours by a clever combination of military strength and bribery.[80] Indeed, he possessed a high degree of craftiness and cunning.[81]

Zengi's spy service was well known and greatly feared:

> He was extremely diligent in acquiring reports from the borders and on what was happening to their rulers even when they were far away. He had someone in the sultan's court to keep an eye on him and to write to him about what the sultan was doing night and day, in war and peace, in joking and in seriousness. He spent a lot of money on that. Every day a number of his spies would come to him.[82]

Within his own lands Zengi ruled by terror and by attention to the smallest detail. His was a domain 'like a garden with a fence round it'.[83] According to the chroniclers, the 'fence' served both to intimidate those outside it who might cast predatory eyes on Zengi's lands and also to prevent those within from leaving and exposing any inherent weaknesses in Zengi's government. If an envoy ever entered Zengi's territory, he would be accompanied throughout his stay; he would not be allowed to meet any of Zengi's subjects and he would leave without having acquired any useful information about Zengi's government. Zengi's subjects, though living in terror, enjoyed security and his lands flourished under his strong rule.[84] He applied vigilance to his wealth, distributing it for safe keeping among the various citadels he possessed.[85]

Several sources portray Zengi as a zealous upholder of public morals, especially in relation to the wives of his soldiery: 'He used to say: "If we do not protect the soldiers' wives by intimidation . . . they will become corrupted because of the frequent absence of their husbands on campaign".'[86] According to Sibt b. al-Jawzi, when Zengi heard that an associate of his, the governor of Jazirat ibn 'Umar (a town on the Syrian–Turkish frontier, nowadays known as Cizre), had enjoyed the favours of various married women, Zengi sent his henchman al-Yaghsiyani, himself a legend in his own time for his unbridled cruelty, to gouge out the governor's eyes and cut off his sexual parts.[87]

In a manner reminiscent of the Mongol army, Zengi maintained cast-iron discipline among his troops. The chronicler of Aleppo, Ibn al-'Adim, writes as follows:

> The *atabeg* was violent, powerful, awe-inspiring and liable to attack suddenly . . . When he rode, the troops used to walk behind him as if they were between two threads, out of fear that they would trample on the crops, and nobody out of fear dared to trample on a single stem [of them] nor march his horse on them . . . If anyone transgressed, he was crucified. He [Zengi] used to say: 'It does not happen that there is more than one tyrant (meaning himself) at one time.'[88]

It should be emphasised that anecdotes such as these about Zengi's cruelty, barbarity and terror-inspiring qualities are relatively rare in the otherwise rather stereotyped and opaque accounts of the Muslim chroniclers, in which one ruler is usually described in very much the same laudatory format as the next. Even in the context of medieval Arab writers discussing the Turks the blood-curdling qualities of Zengi stand out as exceptional. And even the panegyrics of Ibn al-Athir, the apologist of the Zengid dynasty who is writing about their glorious achievements, cannot avoid the odd negative comment.[89]

There seems to have been little doubt about Zengi's own martial skills and courage in war. Ibn al-Athir, with his strong pro-Zengid bias, describes him as 'the most courageous of God's creatures'.[90] One such instance occurred in 1113 when he was participating in a siege of Tiberias under the command of Mawdud, an early Muslim opponent of the Franks. Zengi's lance, according to local legend, had reached the very gate of the town and left a mark in it.[91] Despite his barbarity and lack of honour, and his fighting more fellow-Muslims than infidels, Zengi is labelled 'martyr' (*shahid*) by the Islamic chroniclers; this tag is given to those who fall 'in the path of God' fighting holy war (jihad). Some chroniclers portray Zengi's actions in defence of his borders as jihad. Ibn Wasil, for example, records as one of Zengi's meritorious actions his placing of a Turcoman commander, Baha' al-Din Yaruq, in the province of Aleppo: 'He ordered them to wage jihad against the Franks and made them possessors of what lands belonging to the Franks they recovered. They would fight the Franks in the evening and in the morning

and they blocked that frontier.'[92] More likely this strategy on Zengi's part was an intelligent deployment of Turcomans to pursue their nomadic lifestyle of raiding and to guard a part of his frontier.

'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani describes Zengi as a pillar of jihad,[93] and this image is reinforced in the contemporary epigraphic evidence which has survived in Zengi's name from the last years of his life. In an inscription on a religious college (madrasa) in Damascus dated 10 Rabi' II 533/15 December 1138 Zengi is accorded the titles, among others, of 'the fighter of jihad, the defender of the frontier, the tamer of the polytheists and the destroyer of the heretics'.[94] Other inscriptions from this period reinforce the image of Zengi as a major player in the war against the Franks (for example, an inscription in his name at Aleppo dated Muharram 537/August 1142 bears the same titles).[95] Under his iron hand the religious tide seems to have turned in the Islamic world even before the fall of Edessa. The siting of such inscriptions in Syria, on the doorstep of the Franks, so to speak, argues that during Zengi's later career signs of an alliance between the Turkish commanders of Syria and the urban religious classes were beginning to manifest themselves. It was in these years, too, that jihad began to assume the role which it played during the lifetimes of Nur al-Din and Saladin.

Hovering over Syria throughout the 1130s and the early 1140s was the redoubtable and terrifying figure of Zengi, the first of the three major Muslim leaders who spearheaded 'the counter-crusade' in the twelfth century. Zengi's sheer longevity, especially in such violent and anarchic times, points to his exceptional ruthlessness and sagacity. The picture drawn of him in the Islamic sources, normally so laconic and stereotyped in their depictions of prominent men, is one of an unusually tyrannical and brutal leader with extraordinary powers of cunning and self-preservation. He was in fact the archetypal Oriental despot. The longer he ruled, the more awesome his quasi-legendary reputation became. That he managed to survive a life in the saddle and almost continuous military engagements into his early sixties is sufficient testimony to his remarkable abilities. Even by the standards of the times he was regarded as exceptionally brutal, and the sources dwell on his chillingly ruthless personality, his cruelty and his iron grip on affairs. By the time of his capture of Edessa, Zengi had turned sixty and had seen many a rival off. When he died, it was not just the Franks who heaved a sigh of relief.

Moreover, Zengi's fear-inspiring attributes were accompanied by undoubted military and political skills and rare qualities of leadership. He came from a family long used to military service and rulership, and he is praised in the sources for his excellent government. H. A. R. Gibb speaks rather vaguely of Zengi's 'defects of character and grasping policies'.[96] It has to be said, however, that Nur al-Din and Saladin pursued similar expansionist policies. But the sources, and indeed earlier generations of (the now controversial term) 'Orientalist' scholars, usually portray the latter two heroes of the 'counter-Crusade' in much more glowing terms, depicting them as pious Muslims who pursue a personal as well as a public jihad against the Franks.[97] Zengi, on the other hand, while being praised for his achievements at Edessa, receives unusually harsh treatment from the chroniclers. Certainly Zengi was viewed as a ruler of great status at the time. The Frankish and Byzantine leadership had to negotiate with him, because he was the major Muslim potentate in the Near East in the period from his capture of Aleppo onwards. In the east he behaved as a kingmaker, meddling in the affairs of both sultan and caliph in Baghdad; in the Levant he became the sultan himself, bearing grandiose titles and conducting the affairs of war and peace with Latin rulers and the Byzantine emperor. In Mosul, which he held for twenty years, Zengi minted gold coins and beautified the city. There can be little doubt that he was operating in full independence of the Seljuq sultan. Ibn al-'Adim records that in 531/1137 Zengi sent the Byzantine emperor gifts of leopards, falcons and hawks.[98] Mention has already been made of his claims to be the leader of the movement of jihad against the Franks as shown in his titulature, but the rich protocol of titles given to him on surviving monuments also reveals his eastern Islamic and nomadic heritage. Inscriptions in his name also include Persian titles – such as *Pahlavan-i jahan* ('the Guardian of the World') and *Khusraw* ('the Great King') of Iran – as well as nomadic Turkish ones – *Alp Ghazi Inanc Qutlugh Tughriltegin* ('the Hero, the Warrior of the Faith, the Trusted One, the Fortunate Hero, the Falcon Prince') – and symbolise the tradition of the areas in which he had spent his wide-ranging and disparate career.[99]

A weakness of Zengi's career when viewed as that of an opponent of the Franks is the disparate and widespread nature of his territorial ambitions and his lack of consistent and special interest in Syria. Had he concentrated on

that one area alone, his impact on the Franks would have been correspondingly greater. But such a modus operandi would have been against the realities of early twelfth-century history. Even within Syria the Latins were only one of a number of power groups, and it would be surprising if at that stage Zengi's activities had singled them out for special attention.

Ibn al-Athir believes confidently that Zengi was the leader for whom the Muslim world had long been waiting, and in that spirit he makes extravagant claims on Zengi's behalf:

> God wished to set over the Franks someone who could requite the evil of their deeds . . . He (God) did not see . . . anyone more capable of that command, more solid as regards inclination, stronger or purpose and more penetrating than the lord, the martyr.[100]

Whatever Zengi's religious credentials may have been in the eyes of his contemporaries, the fact remains that he was an outstanding leader, the first Muslim commander capable of maintaining a solid power base and mustering wide military support against the Franks over a sustained period.

'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani, writing in Saladin's time, is in no doubt that Edessa was a turning point for Islam and that the task of Nur al-Din, Zengi's son, was greatly facilitated by Zengi's achievements: 'The contracts of the Franks were abrogated from that moment and their affairs were rendered invalid.'[101] As noted earlier, Zengi's famous victory at Edessa in 1144 proved to be the trigger for the Second Crusade. Because of the division of Zengi's lands between his two most important sons, Sayf al-Din Ghazi inherited the eastern portion of Zengi's possessions and focused his attentions there, while Nur al-Din concentrated his power in Syria and did not meddle in affairs further east. Despite the laudatory descriptions of Nur al-Din in the Islamic sources as a fighter of jihad and a pious Muslim, it is important to stress that he was a third-generation Turkish warlord who had usurped power in Syria and that he had the blood of Aq Sunqur and Zengi in his veins.

To sum up: it is clear that on the Muslim side, the two decades preceding the Second Crusade in the Levant were dominated by one man – Zengi. In the generation after the First Crusade, the Muslims gradually came to terms with the unexpected phenomenon of the Franks. By degrees, they began to evolve counter-strategies and the Muslim revanche crystallised around

this charismatic and ruthless figure, who bore the title of *'Imad al-Din* ('the Support of Religion'). What Zengi achieved were stability and consolidation. Without his foundation of stable power over an unusually long period, the momentum which culminated in the Muslim triumph in 1187 would not have been possible. The fall of Edessa infused the Muslims with new hope.

For the career of Zengi, the conqueror of Edessa, the medieval Islamic sources provide a wealth of detailed insights. Above all, they reveal the model of strong leadership embodied in Zengi, the first really powerful military leader who came into conflict with the Franks and who went some way towards uniting Syria under his firm hand. Indeed, he did much of the preparatory work for which his son Nur al-Din took the credit. The Islamic sources also show that the Muslims of Syria were still far from willing to accept the unifying rule of a commander whose focus of power was outside Syria itself. Damascus still eluded Zengi because he was viewed as a 'prince of the east'. It fell to his son Nur al-Din to take Damascus in 1154 and to unite Muslim Syria, and in large part that was because his centre of operations was Syria itself. Zengi, then, was an outsider; his son, perhaps learning the necessary lesson, took care to become an insider.

Notes

1. Despite its monumental size, Elisséeff's three-volumed work fails to give a proper evaluation of Nur al-Din. See N. Elisséeff, *Nur al-Din. Un grand prince de Syrie au temps des Croisades*, 3 vols (Damascus, 1967).
2. M. Hoch, *Jerusalem, Damaskus und der Zweite Kreuzzug. Konstitutionelle Krise and äußere Sicherheit des Kreuzfahrkönigreiches Jerusalem, AD 1126–1154* (Frankfurt am-Main, 1993).
3. M. A. Köhler, *Allianzen und Verträge zwischen frankischen und islamischen Herrschern im Vorderen Orient* (Berlin and New York, 1991).
4. Ibn al-'Adim, *Bughyat al-talab*, partial ed. A. Sevim (Ankara, 1976), 104.
5. Ibid., 109.
6. Ibid.
7. S. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Vol. 2: The Kingdom of Jerusalem and the Frankish East 1100–1187* (Cambridge, 1987), 27, 29.
8. Despite the preferred transliteration of this Turkish name, which is now Chavli Saqao, the form better known in the West has been retained here. See J. A. Boyle (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Iran* (Cambridge, 1968), vol. 5, 114.

9. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil fi'l-ta'rikh*, ed. C. J. Tornberg, 14 vols (Leiden and Uppsala, 1851–76), vol. 10, 326.
10. Ibid., 351.
11. Ibid., 378.
12. For a very full biography of Aq Sunqur, see Ibn al-'Adim, *Bughya*, 97–110.
13. *Malik* is the Arabic word for king and *shah* is its Persian equivalent.
14. Ibn al-'Adim, *Bughya*, 100, 103.
15. Ibid., 108; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij al-kurub*, ed. J. al-Din El-Shayyal (Cairo, 1953), Vol. 1, 19, 27; Ibn Taghribirdi, *Kitab nujum al-zahira* (Cairo, 1939), vol. 5, 278–9.
16. Ibn al-'Adim, *Bughya*, 100; Sibt b. al-Jawzi, *Mir'at al-zaman* (Hyderabad, 1951), vol. 8, part I, 189; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, vol. I, 28.
17. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-a'yan*, tr. W. M. de Slane, 4 vols (Paris, 1843–71), vol. I, 541; cf. also Sibt, *Mir'at al-zaman*, 189. Holt writes that Zengi was seven when his father died; cf. P. M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades* (London and New York, 1986), 40.
18. Sibt, *Mir'at al-zaman*, 189.
19. Cf. also Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 28–9.
20. Cf. Köhler, *Allianzen und Verträge*.
21. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 30; Sibt, *Mir'at al-zaman*, 189.
22. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 31; Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-a'yan*, 539; Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, vol. 10, 451–2.
23. This view is clearly expressed in a speech attributed to the Seljuq sultan Mas'ud by Ibn al-Azraq, the twelfth-century chronicler of the city of Mayyafariqin (in present-day eastern Turkey) who made several visits to Baghdad, the traditional seat of the 'Abbasid caliphate. Ibn al-Azraq records Mas'ud as saying after the murder of the 'Abbasid caliph al-Mustarshid in 1135: 'I want someone on the [caliphal] throne who will meddle in nothing but religious matters, who will not raise an army, take up [arms] or assemble [men] and who will rebel neither against me nor the members of my family.' See Ibn al-Azraq, *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin*, tr. C. Hillenbrand as *A Muslim Principality in Crusader Times* (Istanbul, 1990), 73. Mas'ud and his successors, however, faced a line of increasingly independent-minded caliphs.
24. Ibn al-Athir, *Ta'rikh al-dawla al-atabakiyya*, ed. 'Abd al-Qadir Ahmad Tulaymat (Cairo, 1963), 34; Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, 454; Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-a'yan*, 540.
25. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-a'yan*, 540; Ibn al-Azraq, *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin*, 54.

26. Ibn al-Azraq, *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin* 58; Ibn al-Furat, *Ta'rikh al-duwal wa'l-muluk*, ed. M. F. El-Shayyal, unpublished PhD (University of Edinburgh, 1986), 30; Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, vol. 10, 467.
27. Ibn al-Azraq, *Tarikh Mayyafariqin*, 83–4; *Islamic Quarterly*, 243; Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, vol. 11, 6–7; Ibn al-Athir, *Atabakiyya*, 48; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 54–5; Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubdat al-halab*, ed. S. Zakkar (Damascus, 1997), vol. 2, 447.
28. Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubda*, vol. 2, 447, 465.
29. *IQ*, 184; Sibt, *Mir'at al-zaman*, 127.
30. The local chronicler of Aleppo Ibn al-'Adim gives the exact date as 17 Jumada II/18 June (*Zubda*, vol. 2, 437; cf. also Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, 457–8; *IQ*, 228).
31. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 40; Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubda*, 438.
32. *IQ*, 200–5; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 41. Cf. Hoch, *Jerusalem*, 31–2. Hama was taken by Shams al-Muluk Isma'il, the ruler of Damascus, in August 1133 (*IQ*, 238–9), but by March 1135 it was again under Zengi's control. Cf. Hoch, *Jerusalem*, 33.
33. Sibt, *Mir'at al-zaman*, 152; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 46–7.
34. After Tughtegin's death, Damascus was ruled first by his son Taj al-Din Buri (d. 1132) and then by Buri's son Shams al-Muluk Isma'il (d. 1135). There then followed two other short-lived Burid rulers.
35. Al-'Azimi, 'La chronique abregée d'al-Azimi', *Journal Asiatique* 230 (1938), 5, 401.
36. *IQ*, 229; Usama b. Munqidh, *Kitab al-i'tibar*, tr. P. K. Hitti as *Memoirs of an Arab–Syrian Gentleman and Warrior in the Period of the Crusades* (New York, 1929), 180; Sibt, *Mir'at al-zaman*, 153; Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, vol. 11, 12–13.
37. Al-Husayni, *Akhbar al-dawla al-saljuqiyya*, ed. M. Iqbal (Lahore, 1933), 109; Sibt, *Mir'at al-zaman*, 158.
38. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 72.
39. Ibid., 74.
40. Hoch, *Jerusalem*, 35.
41. Sibt, *Mir'at al-zaman*, 161–3; *IQ*, 264–5; Al-'Azimi, op. cit., 414; Ibn al-Athir, *Atabakiyya*, 55–6; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 76–7; Usama, *Kitab al-i'tibar*, 25–6.
42. *IQ*, 248–52; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 82.
43. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 83.
44. Hoch, *Jerusalem*, 35.

45. *IQ*, 254–6; Ibn al-ʿAdim, *Zubda*, vol. 2, 463; Sibt, *Mir'at al-zaman*, 172.
46. Ibn al-Athir, *Atabakiyya*, 58–9; Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, Vol. XI, 48–9; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 86–7; *IQ*, 256–8; Sibt, *Mir'at al-zaman*, 172.
47. *IQ*, 258–9; Hoch, *Jerusalem*, 37.
48. *IQ*, 259–60; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 88.
49. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 259. A treaty was established with the clear aim of curbing Zengi's expansionist policies in southern Syria; cf. Köhler, *Allianzen und Verträge*, 188–9; Hoch, *Jerusalem*, 38. In the view of the Damascus leadership, allying with Jerusalem presented less of a threat to the autonomy of Damascus than being part of the Zengid polity. As part of the treaty the Franks would receive Banyas which, as already mentioned, had been taken by Zengi in 1137. Joint forces under Unur and Fulk soon proceeded to press Banyas, which surrendered in June 1140. Unur handed it over to the Franks in accordance with the agreement (Hoch, *Jerusalem*, 38); cf. also M. Hoch, 'The choice of Damascus as the objective of the Second Crusade: a re-evaluation', in *APC*, 359–69.
50. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, vol. 11, 61–2.
51. Ibid., 60; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 91–2.
52. Ibn al-ʿAdim, *Zubda*, vol. 2, 467.
53. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 93; Ibn al-Furat, *Ta'rikh al-duwal wa'l-muluk*, 434.
54. The Islamic sources give a variety of dates for the fall of Edessa but they all agree on the month.
55. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 94.
56. Hoch, *Jerusalem*, p. 40.
57. Ibn al-Furat, *Ta'rikh al-duwal wa'l-muluk*, 444.
58. Ibn al-Athir, *Atabakiyya*, 70.
59. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, vol. 11, 66.
60. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 99; Ibn al-Azraq, *Ta'rikh Mayyafariqin*, 116; *IQ*, 284, 288; Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-aʿyan*, vol. 1, 541; Ibn al-ʿAdim, *Zubda*, vol. 2, 469; Ibn al-Jawzi, *Al-Muntazam* (Hyderabad, 1940), vol. 10, 121; Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, vol. 11, 72. Some sources said that the slave who killed Zengi had a Frankish name.
61. For example, Ibn al-ʿAdim, *Zubda*, vol. 2, 469.
62. A notorious example was that of Il-Ghazi after the battle of Balat (known in Frankish sources as the 'Field of Blood' – *Ager Sanguinis*) in June 1119.
63. Hoch (*Jerusalem*, 92) points out that Zengi's murderer fled first to Qalʿat Jaʿbar before moving on to Damascus in October 1146. This is convincing evi-

dence that he was a Muslim. When Mu'in al-Din came back from Baalbek to Damascus the following month he arrested the murderer and handed him over to Zengi's son Nur al-Din in Aleppo. He was then taken to the latter's brother Sayf al-Din Ghazi in Mosul, where he was executed. The account of Ibn al-Qalanisi makes it clear that before Unur's return the murderer had moved freely around Damascus and had even boasted of his deed. He obviously felt safe from the fear of prosecution in a city which had been threatened by Zengi on several occasions. Hoch argues convincingly that the murderer's subsequent arrest and extradition were not as a result of public pressure but rather were a gesture of goodwill in view of the alliance forged beween Unur and Nur al-Din in the spring of 1147. Cf. *IQ*, 273–4.

64. Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubda*, vol. 2, 469.
65. *IQ*, 270. The attack on Damascus did not take place because Zengi had to move on Edessa to put down an uprising of the Armenian population at the beginning of 1146. Cf. Hoch, *Jerusalem*, 41.
66. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, vol. 1, 100.
67. Herzfeld mentions an inscription which contains the incomplete form of the name Zengi: Ernst Herzfeld, *Matériaux pour un corpus inscriptionum arabicarum. Deuxième partie: Syrie du Nord. Inscriptions et monuments d'Alep* (Cairo, 1995–6), vol. 1, part 1, 165.
68. This etymology seems slightly more plausible than a derivation from *zanj* which referred to black people from East Africa. Neither etymology is very satisfactory.
69. Usama, *Kitab al-i'tibar*, 186.
70. *IQ*, 230.
71. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 83.
72. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 86; *IQ*, 255; Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubda*, vol. 2, 463; Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, vol. 11, 46.
73. BN, ms 767, fol. 142 verso, quoted in *RHC Or*, vol. I, 794–5. Sibt b. al-Jawzi also refers to Zengi's castrating practices (*Mir'at al-zaman*, 191).
74. Ibn Abi Tayyi' as quoted by Ibn al-Furat (*Ta'rikh al-duwal wa'l-muluk*, 132); cf. also Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubda*, vol. 2, 439.
75. Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubda*, vol. 2, 441.
76. Ibid.; cf. also Sibt, *Mir'at al-zaman*, 172; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 86.
77. Al-Bundari, *Zubdat al-nusra*, ed. M. Y. Houtsma (Leiden, 1889), 205.
78. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 105.
79. Ibid., 100.

80. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, vol. 11, 73–4; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 100.
81. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 91.
82. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 102; Sibt, *Mir'at az-zaman*, 190.
83. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 103.
84. Ibid., 101–3; Sibt, *Mir'at al-zaman*, 190.
85. Sibt, *Mir'at al-zaman*, 190.
86. For example, Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, vol. 11, 73.
87. Sibt, *Mir'at al-zaman*, 190; cf. also Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 104.
88. Ibn al-ʻAdim, *Zubda*, vol. 2, 471.
89. In the standard Tornberg edition of the *Kamil* by Ibn al-Athir (vol. 10, 464), the description of Zengi's activities does not include a final sentence which the *Recueil* includes: 'Zengi had committed in this matter an abominable act' (*RHC Or.*, vol. I, 387).
90. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, vol. 11, 73.
91. Ibid.
92. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij*, 103.
93. Quoted by al-Bundari, *Zubda*, 205.
94. *Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arabe* (Cairo, 1937), vol. 8, 213–4.
95. Herzfeld, *d'Alep*, vol. 1, part 1, 183.
96. H. A. R. Gibb, 'Zengi and the fall of Edessa', in S. Runciman (ed.), *A History of the Crusades* (Madison, 1959), vol. 1, 461; indeed, in his chapter – one of the few devoted to a discussion of Zengi – Gibb fails to assess Zengi in any detail at all.
97. Some scholars, notably Ehrenkreutz, have 'demythologized' Saladin and given a much more critical view of him than had the earlier generation of orientalists, such as Gibb and Lane-Poole who based their glowing accounts of Saladin on the biographies of him written in his own time by his close advisers Ibn Shaddad and ʻImad al-Din al-Isfahani. Cf. A. Ehrenkreutz, *Saladin* (Albany, NY, 1972); H. A. R. Gibb, 'The achievement of Saladin', in Y. Ibish (ed.), *Saladin: Studies in Islamic History* (Beirut, 1972); S. Lane-Poole, *Saladin and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (London and New York, 1898).
98. Ibn al-ʻAdim, *Zubda*, vol. 2, 455; Usama went hunting with Zengi for hyena and hare (see Usama, *Kitab al-iʻtibar*, 223).
99. The thirteenth-century Turkish ruler of Mosul, Badr al-Din Lu'lu' used similar titles.
100. Ibn al-Athir, *Atabakiyya*, 33–4.
101. Al-Bundari, *Zubda*, 205.

6

Sultanates: Ayyubids

The Ayyubids were the family dynasty of Saladin (Salah al-Din), the famous Kurdish Muslim hero of the Crusades. The dynasty is normally dated from Saladin's career onward (*c.* 1169), but is named after Saladin's father, Ayyub. In their heyday, the Ayyubids ruled Egypt, Syria, Palestine, the Jazira (a region to the north of Baghdad and extending into Syria) and Yemen. Their rule may be divided into three major phases: Saladin's career, his prominent successors and the dynasty's decline.

Ayyub and his brother Shirkuh came from Dwin in Armenia and served the Turkish warlords Zengi and his son, Nur al-Din, Saladin's two great predecessors in the Muslim 'Counter-Crusade'. Saladin accompanied Shirkuh on three expeditions to Egypt in the 1160s. After Shirkuh's death in 1169, Saladin took control in Egypt in the name of Nur al-Din and re-established Sunni Islam there. However, a rift began to develop between Saladin and his master, Nur al-Din. This rift was prevented from developing into open warfare only by the death of the latter in 1174. That same year Saladin sent his brother Turanshah to conquer Yemen.

Much of Saladin's first decade as an independent ruler, from about 1174 to 1184, was devoted to subjugating his Muslim opponents and creating a secure power base in Egypt and Syria for himself and his family. In 1187 he achieved a decisive victory against the Crusaders at the battle of Hattin and reconquered Jerusalem for Islam. The Third Crusade, launched in response to this loss, ended in 1192 in truce and stalemate. Saladin died the following year. Despite his undoubted successes, he nonetheless failed to rid the Levant of the Crusaders.

Saladin did not envisage the development of a centralised state. He bequeathed a divided empire among his relations, giving his sons the three principalities centred on Damascus, Aleppo and Cairo. In the ensuing power struggle, Saladin's brother, al-Adil, a seasoned politician, rather than Saladin's sons, emerged triumphant by 1202 and reorganised Saladin's inheritance in favour of his own sons. This kind of inter-clan struggle was deep-rooted. Yet, despite the fragmented nature of the Ayyubid confederation, three rulers, al-Adil (1202–18), al-Kamil (1218–38) and al-Ali Ayyub (1240–9), managed to exercise overarching control. The succession of rulers in Aleppo remained among Saladin's direct descendants. Other principalities were set up in Transjordan and Mesopotamia. Two of these, and Mesopotamia, survived beyond the year 1250.

In 1218, the Fifth Crusade arrived in Egypt but made little impact. That year al-Adil died and was succeeded by his son, al-Kamil, who in the treaty of Jaffa (February 1229) gave Jerusalem back to Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor and king of Germany. However, al-Kamil retained a Muslim enclave in Jerusalem, including the Aqsa Mosque, the Dome of the Rock and a corridor from Jerusalem to the coast. The pious on both sides were horrified at this diplomatic manoeuvre.

The death of al-Kamil in 1238 ushered in a turbulent period. His son, al-Ali Ayyub, emerged as the new sultan with the help of the Khwarazmians, displaced troops from Central Asia who had fled the approaching Mongols. In 1244 the Khwarazmians sacked Jerusalem, to widespread condemnation. The Ayyubid dynasty was terminated in 1250 in a coup instigated by the sultan's own slave troops, the Mamluks, who raised one of their number to the rank of sultan. At the same time a new crusade, launched against Egypt under the French king Louix IX, was defeated by the Mamluks.

The unique focus of jihad during Saladin's time was the reconquest of Jerusalem. This goal had faded by the thirteenth century. With the Crusaders, the Ayyubids often practised détente and they were criticised, even in their own time, for their lukewarm prosecution of jihad. During the Ayyubid period the remaining Crusader states became fully integrated as local Levantine polities. The Ayyubids made treaties and truces with them and sometimes, as at al-Harbiyya (1244), fought alongside them against fellow Muslims. Trade was important for the Ayyubids. They were afraid

of further crusades being launched from Europe, which would disrupt their lucrative arrangements with the Italian maritime states.

Despite their religious reverence for Jerusalem, the Ayyubid dynasty never chose it as a capital, preferring Cairo or Damascus. During the Fifth Crusade in 1219, al-Muʿazzam, who, like other Ayyubids, had beautified the Holy City, dismantled its fortifications lest it should fall into Crusader hands again. This action, justified as sorrowful necessity by al-Muʿazzam, provoked widespread condemnation among the local Muslim population. Worse was to come when al-Kamil, plagued by inter-familial strife, and anxious to deflect another crusade, ceded Jerusalem to Frederick II. The Holy City remained a pawn on the Levantine chessboard, coming back under the control of the Ayyubids in 1239 and then handed back to the Crusaders five years later, then being sacked in 1244 by the Khwarazmians and returning to Muslim control.

In other respects, the Ayyubids were keen to prove their Sunni credentials, building religious monuments in Jerusalem, Damascus, Cairo and elsewhere, and choosing grandiose jihad titulature on their correspondence, coins and monumental inscriptions. They founded no less than sixty-three religious colleges in Damascus alone (the Ayyubids were Shafiʿis or Hanafis). They welcomed Sufis, for whom they founded cloisters (*khanqah*s).

The Ayyubids' relationship with the Baghdad caliphate was complex. Like earlier military dynasties that had usurped power, the Ayyubids sought legitimisation from the caliph in Baghdad. Caliphal ambassadors mediated in inter-Ayyubid disputes, and the caliph al-Nasir (d. 1225) created around himself a network of spiritual alliances with Muslim rulers, including the Ayyubids. Such symbolic links did not remove mutual suspicion, however. Both sides feared each other's expansionist aims and denied each other military support.

Saladin inherited eastern governmental traditions brought to Syria by the Seljuqs. In Egypt continuity also existed between Fatimid and Ayyubid practice, especially in taxation. This process is mirrored in the career of Qadi al-Fadil, a Sunni Muslim who had served the Fatimid government in Cairo but later became Saladin's head of chancery. The Ayyubids expanded the existing system of *iqtaʿ* (land given to army officers in exchange for military and administrative duties) to the benefit of their kinsmen and commanders.

Armed with the revenues of Egypt, Saladin built up a strong army which included his own contingents (*ʿaskar*s) as well as *iqta*ʿ-holders, vassals and auxiliary forces. The Ayyubid armies were composed of Kurds and Turks, with the latter predominating. The recruitment of slave soldiers (*mamluk*s), always a feature of Ayyubid military policy, intensified under al-Ali Ayyub. This able ruler began to centralise his administration in Cairo, thus foreshadowing the policies of the Ayyubids' successors, the Mamluks.

Apart from Saladin's brief attempt to build a navy, the Ayyubids were not interested in fighting the Crusaders at sea. They did not construct castles in the Crusader manner, preferring instead to build or strengthen city fortifications and erect citadels, as in Cairo and Aleppo. The fragmented nature of Ayyubid power led to a proliferation of small courts based on individual cities, such as Cairo and Damascus. Here the Ayyubid princes patronised the arts. Some, such as al-Amjad Bahramshah and Abu'l-Fida of Hama, were themselves men of letters; others (Saladin, al-ʿAdil and al-Kamil) were exceptionally able rulers.

Two key characteristics of Ayyubid policy were already evident in Saladin's time: the promotion of Sunni Islam and the need to rule a united Syro-Egyptian polity. Saladin had acquired great prestige by abolishing the 200-year-old Isma'ili Shiʿite caliphate of Cairo. The key Ayyubid principalities were Cairo and Damascus; when these were united under one ruler, equilibrium and stability prevailed.

It is important to view the Ayyubids not only in relation to the Crusaders but also within their wider Islamic context, where they had to contend with other neighbouring states. Among these were the powerful Anatolian Seljuqs, the Artuqids and the Zengids in the Jazira, and the Caucasian Christian kingdoms. Traditionally, the Ayyubids have been cast as opportunistic, self-serving politicians, but their survival depended on local Levantine solidarity. In times of crisis or external aggression the Ayyubids would ally with their close neighbours, whoever they were, to defend their territory.

7

Some Reflections on the Imprisonment of Reynald of Châtillon

I will set your captives free from the waterless pit

Zechariah, 9:11

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage

Richard Lovelace in prison in 1642

Introduction

From the days of Schlumberger[1] onwards the career of Reynald of Châtillon has received much scholarly attention and has excited strong emotions.[2] His reputation has been almost exclusively negative; a range of epithets have been used by scholars over the years, nearly all of them exceedingly hostile – Marshall Baldwin speaks of his 'crude bravado'[3] and describes him as being 'always intransigent and impatient of authority'.[4] Ehrenkreutz calls him 'notorious' and 'an arrogant Raubritter'.[5] In a recent television series followed up by a book on the Crusades, Terry Jones (of Monty Python fame) and his co-author Alan Ereira label Reynald a 'manic aggressive'.[6] Hamilton's spirited defence of Reynald was, however, a timely corrective to the generally negative picture.[7]

This article will examine some aspects of Reynald's career associated with his imprisonment in Aleppo; in particular it will look at the probable place of his imprisonment, the kind of treatment he may have received at the hand of his Muslim captors and the psychological effects of his long imprisonment.

A Brief Résumé of the Career of Reynald of Châtillon

The details of Reynald's flamboyant career are well known[8] and a brief overview will suffice to contextualise the themes chosen for discussion in this article. From the moment he set foot in the Holy Land at the time of the Second Crusade, Reynald was destined to create a splash. Probably handsome, and certainly a 'ladies man', he was to make two very advantageous marriages. The first was to Constance of Antioch who surprised everybody by electing to marry Reynald rather than any of a range of other suitors. This match – made in 1153 – gave him the opportunity of ruling the Principality of Antioch.[9] The Patriarch of Antioch was unwise enough to let his disapproval of this marriage become public knowledge: Reynald retaliated by visiting on him an ingenious punishment. According to William of Tyre:[10]

> Reynald was moved to violent and inexorable wrath . . . He forced the aged priest . . . although an almost helpless invalid, to sit in the blazing sun throughout a summer's day, his bare head smeared with honey.

Reynald's next target was the Byzantine-held Christian island of Cyprus where he rampaged in 1156 causing untold harm and depredation. Gregory the Priest remarks that Reynald treated the inhabitants of Cyprus like infidels, raping and pillaging and cutting off the noses and ears of Greek clerics.[11] Reynald's performance when the Byzantine emperor Manuel came to Syria shortly thereafter borders on the farcical.[12] William of Tyre describes Reynald, 'assailed by the sting of guilty conscience' appearing before the Byzantine emperor barefoot, with a rope around his neck and naked sword in his hand. He threw himself onto the ground where he lay prostrate 'until the glory of the Latins was turned into shame'. William dryly comments: 'He was a man of violent impulses, both in sinning and repenting.'[13]

Even Reynald's mode of capture by the Muslims was typical of his unpredictability and lack of ideological focus. While campaigning in 1160 (or possibly 1161) in the area of Edessa, he was captured on a raid into Muslim territory to seize flocks in the Mar'ash region.[14] According to Elisséeff, Reynald did not bother to find out whether the owners of the herds were Christian or Muslim. He saw them only as people easy to rob.[15] He was taken by his captor, Majd al-Din b. al-Daya, to Nur al-Din at Aleppo.[16] Elisséeff,

Runciman and others remark that nobody hurried to pay the ransom of this turbulent prince – neither the barons of Antioch, nor the King of Jerusalem.[17] Thereupon Reynald remained in captivity at Aleppo for sixteen years.

During his captivity Reynald's wife, Constance of Antioch, died and the principality passed to his stepson, Bohemond III. After Reynald's release from prison in 1176 for a ransom of 120,000 dinars he made his second advantageous marriage some time before June 1177.[18] His bride on this occasion was Stephany of Milly, heiress to the lands beyond the Jordan. By this marriage he gained the valuable citadels of Kerak and Shawbak near the Dead Sea: these controlled the vital caravan route from Cairo to Damascus.

Reynald's most famous escapade, however, involves his extraordinary raid in 1182, which threatened the safety of the pilgrimage and indeed the Holy Cities themselves. No other Crusader prince in the whole history of Outremer tried to pull off a comparable feat. Reynald was one of the close counsellors to the King of Jerusalem, Guy de Lusignan, before the battle of Hattin in 1187; in its aftermath Reynald was seized and personally beheaded by Saladin. Reynald's extraordinarily eventful life finished with a refusal to accept Islam.[19] Saladin's personal hatred of him is emphasised in the sources and Islamic tradition paints him as the worst of all the Crusader foes.

So much for the generally accepted picture of his life and deeds. It is hard not to feel, however, that this bare chronicle of events creates a somewhat two-dimensional picture of Reynald as an unstable though perhaps glamorous swashbuckler. It emphatically does not explain what motivated him and it says almost nothing about what was in all probability the central and defining experience of his life, namely the sixteen years in the prime of his manhood that he spent incarcerated in the grim citadel of Aleppo. This article will attempt to tease out some of the implications of this formative experience.

How Long Was Reynald in Prison?

The exact length of Reynald's captivity remains disputed since there is an unresolved controversy over the year of his capture – 1160 or 1161.[20] There is little doubt, however, about the date of his release – 1176. Whatever the exact truth, it is clear that he remained in captivity for an extremely long time, long than any of his contemporaries. That could in itself be regarded as an achievement. In this discussion it seems sensible to opt for 1160.

Reflections on Reynald of Châtillon's Period in Captivity

There is little or no discussion in the sources about prisons and imprisonment in the medieval Islamic world.[21] There is little information on the legal aspects of imprisonment, on the practicalities of daily life in a dungeon or on what determined whether a prisoner was allowed to live or was killed in captivity.

Reynald was kept in captivity for an extremely long time – around sixteen years. Surprisingly, although this fact is mentioned by all scholars who have written general histories of the Crusades and also those who have focused particularly on Reynald and his circle, they pass over it with insufficient comment. Baldwin says enigmatically, 'Not even sixteen years of captivity had broken his restless spirit', but he does not elaborate.[22] A number of questions present themselves on the issue of Reynald's imprisonment. Where was he kept? How was he treated? Most importantly, what were the effects of this long period of confinement on him, both physically and psychologically? How did he survive? Survive, moreover, to fight again?

The Place of Reynald's Imprisonment

It is generally accepted that Reynald was taken after his capture[23] (probably on 23 November 1160) by Majd al-Din b. al-Daya, the milk-brother of Nur al-Din and his lieutenant at Aleppo, directly to that city. Thereafter the sources fall silent on the details of his imprisonment except to say that it was in Aleppo that he remained.[24] It is particularly disappointing that the local chronicler of Aleppo, Ibn al-'Adim and the court historian of the Zengids, Ibn al-Athir, shed no light on the exact place of Reynald's imprisonment. Presumably, Ibn al-'Adim would assume that his reader knew such details; Ibn al-Athir (or his written sources) would not perhaps possess such information or might wish to gloss over this aspect of the career of Nur al-Din. Keeping prisoners of war, especially important ones, in captivity was, after all, part of the political process and the conventions were well known. Of course, the most likely location for Reynald's prison, as for other high-ranking Crusader captives at Aleppo, would have been the citadel. Indeed, in the primary sources used by Anne-Marie Eddé in her recent magisterial study of the Principality of Antioch in the Ayyubid period, there are references to prisoners being held in the Aleppo citadel.[25] Claverie points out that after the

battle of La Fourbie in 1237 Frankish prisoners were transferred to Aleppo and put into the dungeons of the citadel.[26] It is improbable that an enemy as dangerous as Reynald, although his major excesses so far had been committed against Christians rather than Muslims, would have been accorded especially favourable treatment by his Muslim captors in Aleppo. House arrest is not a very likely option, not least because of his turbulent, unpredictable character. He was not a king as St Louis was.[27]

As regards the exact location of the dungeons in the pre-Mongol citadel of Aleppo, there is little useful information in the sources and it is not possible for archaeologists to help much here. Successive earthquakes in Syria during the twelfth century damaged monuments in Aleppo; during one such earthquake in 563/1170, according to Ibn al-ʻAdim, Nur al-Din 'went to Aleppo and found its walls and bazaars had collapsed'.[28] Moreover, the Mongols in 1260, followed later by Timur, carried out such a successful demolition of the citadel that surprisingly little of the Ayyubid walls remains, as recent German survey work seems to suggest.[29] Most probably, however, the cells for prisoners were situated beneath the citadel;[30] they were deep holes gouged out of the rock, which could easily be watched over and policed night and day. There are in fact frequent references in the medieval Islamic sources to viziers, rebels, prisoners of war and other miscreants being imprisoned in the citadel of Aleppo. Indeed, there must have been a reasonably large space for them since sometimes there is mention of 'groups of prisoners' being held there.[31] An important clue to the probable location of the prison at Aleppo is provided by Ibn al-Shihna and cited by Eddé. According to Ibn al-Shihna, the Ayyubid ruler, al-Zahir, dug some holes in the talus below the walls on the city side of the citadel; from these he made cells for twenty or thirty prisoners.[32] A similar strategy had probably been adopted in pre-Ayyubid times.[33]

The tradition of imprisonment in a deep pit is a very ancient one in the Near East. Apart from the well-known example of Joseph, Jeremiah was 'cast into the dungeon . . . that was in the court of the prison; and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire'. Ebed-melech then says to the King: 'He (Jeremiah) is like to die.' The King then orders thirty men to remove Jeremiah from the pit. The depth of the pit is suggested both by the number of men needed to lift him out without

breaking his bones and by the use of old rags and worn-out clothes which Jeremiah has to put under his armpits to pad out the ropes.[34]

Similar references to pits (*jubb*)[35] are found in the medieval Islamic sources. The pit in which Ibn Taymiyya languished in Cairo was full of bats;[36] there are references to the *jubb* in Khartpert[37] and in the stories of *The One Thousand and One Nights*.

The Perception of Prison in Medieval Islamic Thinking

The usual word for prison/imprisonment in Arabic is *sijn*. It is interesting to note the deeply resonant tones the root *s-j-n* possesses in Arabic. Traditionally, medieval Islamic lexicographers have tended to give as a synonym for *sijn* the term *sijjin*, one of the mysterious words in the Qur'an. *Sijjin* excites terror and has horrifying overtones associated with Hell and Satan.[38]

> Nay, but the record of the vile is in Sijjin –
> Ah! What will convey unto thee what Sijjin is! (Qur'an 83: 7–8)

Ibn Khaldun expresses popular views of prisons when he writes:

> People who go down into deep wells and dungeons perish when the air there becomes hot through putrefaction, and no winds enter these places to stir the air up.[39]

Who Looked After Prisons and Prisoners?

It is interesting to ask who would have borne the responsibility for Reynald's custody and who would have looked after him on a daily basis. Was there in medieval Islamic times a special individual to whom was allocated the responsibility for looking after prisons and prisoners? Who was it, moreover, who was charged with the negotiations for the release of prisoners such as Reynald, and who would deal with the arrangements for the ransom? The evidence is patchy and no firm conclusions may be drawn from it. At a high level, it is likely that, under the influence of Seljuq institutions from further east, the military official known as the *hajib* in Zengid and Ayyubid times was responsible for the administering of justice and the administration of the citadel.[40] Alternatively or additionally, the title *amir jandar* also comes to mind. Such an official was attached to the royal household and carried out

the sovereign's orders for the death sentence. Under the Ayyubids the *amir jandar* was one of the highest-ranking officers of the state.[41] Quatremère, quoting al-ʿUmari, writes:

> If the sultan wants to torture or kill a man it is the *amir jandar* who is charged with carrying out the sentence.[42]

When dealing with the Maghrib, Ibn Khaldun refers to the office of *mizwar*. This official was responsible, as commandant of the elite troops who served at the court of the ruler, for 'enforcing the punishment he [the ruler] metes out, executing the severe measures he takes, and guarding the inmates of his prisons'.[43]

It is likely that if prisoners were brought before the ruler there would have been an official responsible for this: such a person may possibly have been the *naqib al-jaysh* or the *naqib al-ʿaskar*.[44]

It is not clear whether there was a distinction made between Muslim malefactors languishing in prison, Muslim officials awaiting torture to be mulcted of their ill-gotten wealth and Frankish or other Christian prisoners of war.[45] Nor is it clear whether they were segregated.

How Was Reynald Treated by his Muslim Captors?

On initial capture, Reynald, like any other prisoner of war, was subjected to humiliation. From the outset of his time as a Muslim captive, Reynald's pride was humbled. As William of Tyre puts it (with some licking of his lips):

> A captive, bound with the chains of the foe, he was led to Aleppo in most ignominious fashion, there to become, with his fellow captives, the sport of the infidels.[46]

Gregory the Priest also stresses that Reynald was subjected to humiliations by the man who ambushed him, Ibn al-Daya.[47]

It was common practice at the time on both sides for prisoners to be chained, sometimes even to each other in pairs or in bigger groups. Muslim sources mention that the prisoners taken by Saladin in 1179 were transferred to Damascus, loaded down with chains;[48] among these captives were prestigious figures such as Baldwin II of Ibelin, Odo, the Grand Master of the Temple, and the son of the Countess of Tripoli.[49] After the battle of

Hattin, one Muslim man 'was leading twenty Franks with a rope around their necks'.[50]

On arrival in Muslim cities, prisoners were often paraded in triumph through the streets to the sound of drums with broken and reversed standards. The heads of those Frankish soldiers killed on the battlefield would also be exhibited.[51] Al-Maqrizi records that in 642/1244–5 Frankish captives were put on camels, their leaders on horses, and they were thus paraded through the streets of Cairo.[52] As his bravura performance before the Emperor Manuel had shown, Reynald was no stranger to drama. But his capture was no dress rehearsal. This was the real thing. For someone of Reynald's arrogance, the humiliation of being made a public spectacle must have been especially galling.

On arrival at Aleppo, if not before, those captives who were bearded may have been shaved before they were put away.[53] This practice would differentiate clearly between Frankish captives and other prisoners. In a legal document of 1280 Ibn al-Mukarram suggests that such a procedure was adopted in Mamluk Cairo.[54]

How Was Reynald Treated in the Aleppo Citadel?

Fulcher of Chartres laments in high-flown terms the horrors experienced by Crusaders in Muslim captivity:

> Many captives were taken unjustly and were most barbarously cast into foul prisons and ransomed for excessive prices, or tormented there by three evils, namely hunger, thirst, and cold, and secretly put to death.[55]

Was Reynald treated more or less harshly than other high-ranking Franks? It is not very likely that during this phase of his career his Muslim captors would have treated him in a more severe manner than other prestigious Frankish prisoners since, as already mentioned, at that time Reynald had reserved his most villainous deeds not for the Muslims but for his fellow-Christians: the Patriarch of Antioch, the Christian island of Cyprus and the Christian peasants in the region of Edessa. But it remains possible that news of his notoriety and panache had reached Muslim ears and that his captors paid particular attention to him.

Royal or aristocratic status did not necessarily imply better treatment as a captive. The case of Joscelin II of Edessa and his son Joscelin, who were

thrown at different times into a dungeon in the Aleppo citadel, makes that point most forcibly.[56] Most noteworthy of all in this context is the remarkable fact that almost immediately after his release after sixteen years in prison, Reynald returned to active service in full middle age at the head of the Franks of Antioch fighting against Saladin during his siege of A'zaz in June 1176 – a clear indication both that Reynald was no ordinary man physically and that he had not been prevented by ill-treatment from taking up arms at once. Given that fighting in the Levant in the twelfth century could involve the wearing of heavy armour and the wielding of heavy weapons for long periods at a time, this means that Reynald had by one means or another managed to keep himself literally 'fighting fit' while in captivity. This is telling evidence of his determination and his spirit, triumphantly unbroken by prison, and may perhaps suggest conditions of imprisonment that allowed him room for some physical exercise at least.

Of course, royal or quasi-royal status often meant that a prisoner of war was kept alive for the high ransom which could be raised by his supporters outside or for purposes of exchange against Muslim prisoners held in Frankish jails. However, high social rank did not preclude the possibility, either on initial capture or during a long imprisonment, that the Muslim ruler, influenced by changing political circumstances, or even on a whim, might suddenly decide to torture or kill the prisoner. Not only maiming, but also the deaths of prominent Crusader leaders in Muslim captivity are recorded – for example, Odo, the Grand Master of the Temple[57] died whilst in Saladin's custody. Tughtegin, the early twelfth-century ruler of Damascus, was not swayed by financial considerations and is reported in the Muslim sources as having killed with his own hand several Crusader captives, including Gervase de Basoches in 1108.[58] Nur al-Din, Reynald's captor, was not famed for his mild treatment of prisoners, however prestigious they might be. Indeed, he meted out terrible treatment to Joscelin II in 544/1150. Joscelin had sent a wounding message to Nur al-Din; in fury he later retaliated by arranging for Joscelin's ambush and by gouging out his eyes and torturing him in the citadel of Aleppo. There Joscelin languished in irons for a further nine years until his death in 1159.[59] Joscelin remained loyal to Christianity despite all punishments and threats until his death.[60] Given the omission of any such details in the case of Reynald, and given too the evidence of a very

vigorous career after his release, it can be assumed that he escaped serious physical maltreatment in the course of his imprisonment. Perhaps Reynald's talent in adverse circumstances of ingratiating himself personally with those in power, as exhibited in his melodramatic performance before Manuel after the Cyprus escapade, also enabled him to survive in a Muslim prison.

It is probable, especially in view of his potential worth in ransom money, that Reynald was kept in chains during his captivity. Evidence provided by Ibn al-Mukarram indicates that, in the Mamluk period at least, Frankish prisoners were kept permanently in chains.[61]

It is unlikely that Reynald would have been allowed out of captivity to perform tasks of hard labour, since such activities are more likely to have been undertaken by common prisoners than by those of aristocratic descent with a potentially high ransom value.[62] Hard labour, on the other hand, despite the horrors it involved, would have afforded the prisoners some small benefits – light, fresh air, limited movement of limbs. These advantages would have to be balanced against the extreme dangers of severe manual labour under the unremitting rays of the sun and the accompanying thirst and sunstroke. Was this better than being enclosed in a dark pit or at best a small room, day and night? Wherever he may have been housed, Reynald would have suffered greatly from the physical inactivity imposed on him. A prisoner as valuable as he was would be watched all the time.[63] It is difficult to determine what, if any, contact Reynald would have had with his fellow-prisoners in the Aleppo citadel. It is conceivable that prisoners were allowed occasionally to meet each other, either out of the generosity of a jailer or because of bribes or the promise of a reward on release. It is also likely that prisoners developed strategies for communicating with each other during the long hours of captivity. In prison at Aleppo, for at least part of Reynald's captivity, were Joscelin III, Raymond of Tripoli and, briefly, Bohemond. Reynald outstayed them all and still lived to fight another day.

It is also possible that these high-ranking Crusader prisoners were allowed visits by local Christian priests; given the significant numbers of Christians in Aleppo it is possible that this privilege was allowed to the prisoners. Certainly *in extremis* a visit would have been permitted – as is well known, Joscelin II, Count of Edessa, although he followed the Latin confession, was given the last rites in his dungeon in Aleppo by the Jacobite bishop of the city, Ignace.[64]

Another well-known Latin prisoner who died in Muslim captivity, this time in Damascus, was the Grand Master of the Templars, Odo of Saint-Amand.[65]

Why was Reynald held in prison longer than the other high-ranking Crusader leaders and why was the ransom demanded for him by his captors higher than that of his peers? Was it because he was so disliked and feared by his Muslim captors and regarded as too much of a danger to be released? Was it because there was still, sixteen years later, a reluctance on the part of the Crusader leadership to pay up? Eventually, he was released for the ransom of 120,000 dinars,[66] whilst Raymond of Tripoli cost only 80,000. Hamilton argues[67] that the high price paid for Reynald was because, although during his captivity he had become a landless man, his prestige had risen, as both his daughter Agnes and his stepdaughter Mary[68] had married royalty.

It has been argued that Nur al-Din was unwilling to release prisoners from captivity. It seems clear enough that Nur al-Din enjoyed the prestige of possessing rich prisoners; indeed, William of Tyre remarks: Nur al-Din 'avoit grant gloire de tenir noz riches homes en sa prison'.[69] Nevertheless, he was willing to, and did, release some of his most prestigious prisoners for good pragmatic reasons. Political expediency was, of course, a factor. Just before Reynald's capture, after the Byzantine emperor Manuel had returned to Constantinople after his expedition to Antioch in 1159, Nur al-Din, fearful of reprisals, had released most of the prisoners in his hands.[70] The Grand Master of the Temple, Bertrand de Blanchefort, captured in 1157 with eighty-seven of his knights, was released on this occasion.[71] Reynald himself led an expedition involving the Templars to liberate captives in Aleppo and Damascus.[72] Bohemond III (whose sister was married to the Byzantine emperor, Manuel) was set free very quickly by Nur al-Din in 1164. No doubt, Bohemond's prestigious connections weighed heavily in this decision. Exchange of prisoners was a useful strategy.[73] When Bertrand was released by Nur al-Din in 1160 no ransom was paid, apparently in exchange for Usama's brother.[74] Yet no such release awaited Reynald. Why was it that Nur al-Din resolutely refused to let him go? Given the above examples of a flexible approach to prisoners on the part of Nur al-Din, it is all the more significant that Reynald was held in captivity for so long and that he was not freed until after the death of Nur al-Din. Had his captor not died, he would probably have remained *sine die* in the Aleppo citadel. If Nur al-Din was holding

out for an enormous ransom, clearly this plan had not proved successful. Whatever his reasons, however, Nur al-Din had kept Reynald in custody for longer than any other prisoner (even longer than Joscelin III). So it was highly fortunate for Reynald that in the uncertain interregnum after the death of one powerful warlord, Nur al-Din, and the consolidation in power of the next, Saladin, there was an opportunity to negotiate for his release.[75]

Reynald's Release

There would be little or no chance of rescuing prisoners by force from the Aleppo citadel nor was there much likelihood of a spectacular escape such as that staged by Joscelin I from Khartpert in 517/1123–4.[76] Negotiations and an agreed ransom were the usual way for prisoners to be released from such a stronghold. The release of prisoners during the Crusading period, on both sides of the ideological divide, came to be regarded as a meritorious act. Muslim rulers could establish a pious bequest (*waqf*) for the release of prisoners or they could provide money directly for such a purpose. The case of Gökböri, the lord of Irbil, is worthy of note. As his obituary given by Ibn Khallikan notes:

> Twice every year he dispatched a number of trusty agents to the cities on the sea-coast, and furnished them with large sums for the redemption of such Muslims as might be in the hands of the infidels.[77]

The circumstances of Reynald's release are well-known. He was set free by Sayf al-Din Ghazi, the son of Nur al-Din, who was operating from Mosul. The deal involved the release of other high-ranking Latin prisoners. The release occurred probably between 26 April and 13 May 1176.

What Were the Effects of Reynald's Long Period of Confinement, both Physically and Psychologically?

I now come to the core of this paper, and I freely admit that it involves some speculation. My defence must be that the scholars who have dealt with Reynald's life in detail have most unaccountably failed to take into consideration the huge black hole at the centre of that life. Little imagination is needed to work out that the effects of sixteen years of harsh imprisonment in the prime of life would be a decisive experience for anyone. At first glance, the

personality of Reynald as portrayed in the Crusader sources which speak of him before his captivity would seem to be ill-suited to the demands of captivity. Someone as active and energetic as he was must have found the enforced inactivity extremely irksome. His brutal, passionate and turbulent personality would not be well suited to a life in prison. Friedman rightly draws attention to the lack of psychological preparation on the part of the Crusaders to the concept or reality of captivity; their ideology embraced two possibilities – victory or death ('sive autem supervixerunt, sive mortui fuerint'). Captivity was probably therefore considered as shameful. Nor were the Franks, unlike the Syrian Muslims in a frontier society, used to the practicalities of ransoming captives.[78]

Schlumberger writes with his customary hyperbole of the immense void over Reynald's life during his 'interminable captivity' and that nothing is known of his terrible sufferings.[79] As already mentioned, Reynald seems to have escaped permanent maiming or blinding in prison. He must in any case have possessed a remarkably strong physical constitution to have survived such a long stay in the Aleppo dungeon. Even supposing that for financial or other political reasons his captors wished to keep him sufficiently healthy, he would not have lived in any degree of comfort. Poor food, terrible sanitation, insects, infection, lack of movement would all have endangered his health throughout his captivity. The extremes of temperature characteristic of the Aleppan climate would have been difficult to bear – cold winters and hot summers[80] – but down in the dungeons of the citadel it was probably cold all the time – an easier situation for a prisoner from northern Europe to bear than the heat of an Aleppan summer.

Reynald must have experienced intense loneliness, recurring humiliations and boredom. Frustration too must have afflicted him constantly, as he sought by all possible means to organise his own ransom,[81] Friedman argues that in the twelfth century, before the founding of military orders whose task it was to organise and fund the ransom of captives, it was the knight's own responsibility to arrange his own release and pay his own ransom. By the thirteenth century the obligation of vassals to contribute to the ransom of their lord seems to have crystallised.[82] Fear must have been a recurring, if not permanent, emotion for Reynald – fear, of course, of punishment, torture or death at any time at the hand of his captors and fear of rotting until he died

in Aleppo if his ransom was not found. Other more primeval forms of fear may well have preyed on his mind; fear of Divine punishment for his misdeeds during his first period of fighting in the Holy Land where he attacked fellow-Christians as much, if not more, than Muslims and fear caused by experiencing at first hand a series of major earthquakes which hit Syria during his time in captivity. For the reign of Nur al-Din alone there is mention in the Muslim sources of earthquakes in Syria in 552/1157,[83] 563/1167–8,[84] and 565/1170. Ibn Khallikan mentions that on 18 Shawwal 565/5 July 1170 'Aleppo and many other cities suffered severely from an earthquake'.[85] Two of these occurred during Reynald's captivity in Aleppo. And there were more, since Ibn al-'Adim states that the earthquakes recurred for a period of seven years.[86] The earthquake of 565/1170 hit the Aleppo citadel and Nur al-Din repaired its west front.[87] If Reynald was in chains during his captivity, as is likely in view of his increasing value for ransom, then being assailed by an earthquake must have been an even more horrific experience for him and his fellow-prisoners than for others.

Far more significant, perhaps, than the physical difficulties and indignities which Reynald had to endure for sixteen years were the psychological traumas of his personal humiliation and of captivity itself. These points are raised by Nicholson in connection with another long-term prisoner (1164–76) in the Aleppo citadel, Joscelin III; Nicholson remarks that the enforced military and political inactivity in the prime of life must have been very irksome. The ennui of imprisonment, heightened by bitterness, was probably shared by Joscelin's fellow prisoners, Raymond of Tripoli and Reynald.[88]

Violent emotion fuels the will to live. Rage would have assailed Reynald, especially at the beginning of his imprisonment, and at key moments such as the ransoming of his fellow-prisoners whilst he was left to languish in captivity. A modern captive, Brian Keenan, expresses such emotions:

> I began to rage and blaspheme man and God. I cursed every one of my captors and searched out every foul-mouthed word of condemnation that I could find.[89]

Reynald's proximity to Muslims day in, day out, must have led him to learn at least some Arabic but that by no means implies that he would have felt sympathy for the enemy's religious and cultural attitudes. It is plain that

he left Muslim captivity just as he had entered it, as an 'un-reconstructed' Frank. Reynald's attitude to Islam and to his Muslim captors, no matter what survival strategies he may have developed, must have been one of profound and settled hatred. The deep psychological effects of his captivity must, I would argue, have moulded him in his mature years and have had a direct influence over his actions after his release. If strong convictions are the secret of surviving deprivation and captivity then Reynald's erratic commitment to the Crusader cause, exhibited in his frenetic and unfocused raiding before his imprisonment, must have hardened in the Aleppo citadel into one single-minded and unswerving purpose – to fight Islam – for which he is famous after his release, during the years 1176–87. The formidable reputation he had acquired by the time of his death is summed up by Bar Hebraeus:

> Now Arnat (Reynald) was an old man who was experienced in wars, and there was no limit to his strength and courage, and he was held in great fear by the Arabs.[90]

Nelson Mandela writes in his autobiography in very graphic terms about his twenty-six years' imprisonment in South Africa:[91]

> The challenge for every prisoner, particularly every political prisoner, is how to survive prison intact, how to emerge from prison undiminished, how to conserve and even replenish one's beliefs.

Prison, says Mandela, is a kind of crucible which tests a man's character.[92] In a context which made it difficult to tell night from day, where it was no doubt hard to mark the passing of minutes, hours, days, weeks, months and years, it would be easy to lose one's sanity. Frustration, physical pain, hunger, thirst, fear of death, sheer boredom – all these must have assailed Reynald in Aleppo. They must have been exacerbated after he heard that Bohemond, one of his fellow-prisoners, had been released in the summer of 1165. Reynald might well have wondered why *he* was the one doomed to languish in the dungeon. An increasing commitment to his faith, coupled with own powerful urge to survive, may well have sustained him as time went on. An awareness of the sins he had committed in his earlier career must have assailed him. It would have been a short step from that realisation to the belief that God was punishing him for his recklessness: if ever he was released he would make amends.

The Effects of Reynald's Captivity on his Subsequent Actions

There is little or no comment in the secondary literature on the effects of Reynald's captivity on his subsequent actions – the seizing of the caravans and the Hijaz exploit, in particular – and the motives which fuelled them. Stevenson writes eloquently about him:[93]

> Captivity had not dimmed his fiery zeal nor abated his high spirit. In these last days of the Kingdom he is the old Crusading hero incarnate; full of restless energy and reckless daring.

Baldwin echoes these sentiments in his statement that Reynald had not been broken by captivity.[94] Hamilton's insights, however, go deeper and he stresses that Reynald was now 'sincerely committed to the crusader cause in a way in which he had not earlier been'.[95] Nevertheless, still greater emphasis should perhaps be placed on the psychological underpinning of Reynald's later actions after his release. Far from being wild and reckless these must have been fuelled by a religious resolve and passion inflamed in captivity. He had learned where the Muslims were most vulnerable and that is where he struck. His achievements were all the more remarkable since he had lost his prime in prison and emerged, as Schlumberger puts it, 'already in decline'.[96] The awareness that there was little enough left of his active life would certainly have spurred him on. It was a case of now or never, with the tinge of desperation which that attitude is liable to bring.

It has frequently been said by Crusader historians that Reynald's activities after his release brought about the loss of the Kingdom of Jerusalem in 1187. His breaking of truces by his attacks on Muslim caravans, his open threats to Islam, his raids down the Red Sea are criticised by Crusader and Muslim sources alike. But they make excellent sense in the context which I have tried to sketch. As already mentioned, Reynald had not been very vigorous in prosecuting war against the Muslims when he first arrived from France. He was motivated by personal ambition and plain greed. But once released from captivity, his natural psychological alliance was with the Crusader newcomers (such as Philip of Flanders and William of Montferrat) and his extraordinary bellicosity despite a whole adult lifetime in the Muslim world must surely be attributed to the experiences of prison and to his remarkable ability to

survive, physically and mentally. He was 'reborn'; it was as if he had just come from Europe. As Baldwin remarks, Reynald 'never lost the boldness usually associated with the newcomer'.[97]

That is why his targets changed so dramatically. After his release in 1176, gone were his 'crazy' raids on Christian targets. He now had a score to settle, and he had had sixteen years to plan it. His goal was now unalterably fixed on attacking and destroying Islam. On careful consideration, the Hijaz episode seems far less wild and idiosyncratic than scholars have hitherto described it. Reynald's hatred of Islam is highlighted in the Muslim sources. Vile words are put into his mouth. Most of the key episodes concerning Reynald after his release are marked with uncharacteristic personalised ferocity on both sides. Reynald refused to release the caravan captives whom he had imprisoned in the dungeon at Kerak. Surely this can be seen as an act prompted by a desire for vengeance and for a punishment to inflict in return for all the years he had spent in captivity. The captive has become the captor in a violent and vengeful tit for tat. And the famous climax to the story shows Saladin, even in the most panegyrical accounts of his career, slicing off Reynald's head personally whilst treating other high-ranking Crusader captives with magnanimity.

As already mentioned, Hamilton argues that in the second half of his public life Reynald was sincerely committed to the Crusader cause.[98] But the limitation of his otherwise excellent account is that it does not fully address the psychological effects of Reynald's captivity. I would argue that this experience was the trigger for a change of heart that led to a total change of policy. From Christian targets he moved to Muslim ones. Whatever the balance of opinion may be, Reynald should, I would argue, be viewed as a rather tragic figure who preferred in the dying days of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem to attack and not to defend, and to fight to the bitter end. The crucible of an Aleppan prison had made sure of that. Reynald must have been around sixty, if not more, when he was killed. From the Crusader standpoint he has been made by some the scapegoat for the loss of Jerusalem. A few dissenting voices see him in a more heroic light – the author of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum* castigates Saladin for cutting off 'that veteran and aged head'[99] – and Peter of Blois went so far as to write the *Passio Reginaldis*.[100] So at least some of his fellow Crusaders understood his motivation.

Conclusions

Perhaps one can go too far in attempting to restore the good reputation of Reynald de Châtillon. Indeed, for some scholars, he will always remain a loose cannon. I have tried to show that Reynald's sixteen years' captivity

Figure 7.1 Seal of Reynald of Châtillon

was the defining experience of his career. Before Aleppo he had been a buccaneer engaged in daring raids notably against Christian targets. He was thus crudely out for personal gain. He was a newcomer 'on the make'. After his release from Aleppo this buccaneering spirit was transmuted into extraordinarily bellicose, but also extraordinarily effective and focused action against *Muslim* targets. His ability to surprise and to think laterally – demonstrated in his notorious attack on the Byzantine island of Cyprus – was again highlighted in even more dramatic fashion, in his menacing the hajj route from his Kerak base, and in his raids down the Red Sea. These demonstrate his hard-won insider's knowledge of Muslim psychology. Whilst in captivity, his survival skills were honed. Perhaps he used his famous charm on his jailers. But at a more profound level, he must have been spurred on by the iron resolve, born of hatred of his captors and their accursed religion, to exact vengeance for being kept captive for sixteen years, and by an awareness that God was punishing him for his sins against Christendom before his imprisonment. So the clue to his whole life lies in those silent years of suffering.

Notes

* It is a great pleasure to make this contribution to the Festschrift in honour of Donald Richards, an exemplary scholar and teacher.

1. G. Schlumberger, *Reynald de Châtillon Prince d'Antioche Seigneur de la Terre d'Outre-Jourdain* (Paris, 1898).
2. For example, the views of Schlumberger's contemporary, Max van Berchem, who, in his review of Schlumberger's book, describes him as 'a looter who embodied in marvellous fashion the greatnesses and weaknesses of the Crusades'; M. van Berchem, 'Renaud de Châtillon' in *Opera Minora* (Geneva, 1978), ii, 977.
3. M. Baldwin, *Raymond III of Tripolis and the Fall of Jerusalem 1140–1187* (Princeton, 1936), 45.
4. Baldwin, *Raymond*, 62.
5. A. Ehrenkreutz, *Saladin* (Albany, 1972), 144, 180.
6. T. Jones and A. Ereira, *The Crusades* (London, 1994), 150.
7. B. Hamilton, 'The Elephant of Christ: Reynald of Châtillon', in D. Baker (ed.), *Religious Motivation: Biographical and Sociological Problems for the Church Historian* (Oxford, 1978), 97–108.

8. For a very recent summary of Reynald's career before his captivity, see B. Hamilton, *The Leper King and his Heirs* (Cambridge, 2000), 104–5.
9. Hamilton, *Leper King*, 104.
10. William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, tr. E. A. Babcock and A. C. Krey (New York, 1943), ii, 235.
11. Matthew of Edessa, *Parmut'iwn*, tr. E. Dulaurier as *Chronique de Matthieu d'Edesse avec la Continuation de Grégoire le Prêtre jusqu'en 1162* (Paris, 1858), 353.
12. Jones and Ereira describe him as Toad of Toad Hall, *Crusades*, 154.
13. William, *History*, ii, 277.
14. Matthew, *Chronique*, 363; Michael the Syrian, tr. J.-B. Chabot as *Chronique de Michel le Syrien* (Paris, 1899–1914), 316; J. Richard, *Histoire des Croisades* (Paris, 1996), 189.
15. N. Elisséeff, *Nur al-Din: un grand prince musulman de Syrie au temps des Croisades* (Damascus, 1967), ii, 552.
16. Michael, *Chronique*, 319.
17. Elisséeff, *Nur al-Din*, ii, 553; S. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades* (Cambridge, 1951–4), ii, 357–8.
18. Hamilton, 'Elephant', 98, n. 13; Hamilton, *Leper King*, 104.
19. For a recent analysis of these events, see Hamilton, *Leper King*, 179–85.
20. For a detailed discussion of this topic, see W. Stevenson, *The Crusaders in the East* (Cambridge, 1907), 83, n. 2; William, *History*, ii, 285, n. 82. Much hinges on the interpretation of the statement of William of Tyre that: 'This disaster [Reynald's capture] occurred on November 23 in the eighteenth year of King Baldwin's reign'; William, *History*, ii, 284–5. Hamilton states that Reynald was imprisoned for fifteen years and that he was captured in 1161; cf. Hamilton, *Leper King*, 104. Richard gives a date of 23 November 1161; Richard, *Histoire*, 189. Elisséeff states confidently that the exact date was 22 Dhu'l-Qa'da 555/23 November 1160 – *Nur al-Din*, ii, 552. For the primary sources which mention the capture, see C. Cahen, *La Syrie du Nord à l'époque des Croisades et la Principauté Franque d'Antioche* (Paris, 1940), 405, n. 1. It is unfortunate that the major medieval Islamic chronicler, Ibn al-Athir, usually reliable on dating, does not mention the seizing of Reynald in either of his two historical works; Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kamil fi'l-ta'rikh*, ed. C. J. Tornberg (Leiden and Uppsala, 1851–76), and *al-Ta'rikh al-bahir fi'l-dawla al-atabakiyya*, ed. A. A. Tulaymat (Cairo, 1963). The town chronicler of Aleppo, Ibn al-'Adim, writes that the capture of 'Joscelin son of Joscelin' (Joscelin III) took place in

Rajab 555/July–August 1160. Joscelin was brought to the citadel of Aleppo by Ibn al-Daya, who had also captured 'the second prince' and taken him and the others to Aleppo, Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubdat al-halab*, ed. S. Zakkar (Damascus, 1997), ii, 488.

21. This point is made most forcibly by Irene Schneider: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, s.v. 'sidjn'. There is little information about how prisoners of war fared and what scattered information does exist is difficult to evaluate. Schneider comments that, besides imprisonment in a special prison building, house arrest or imprisonment in the citadel were possible options.
22. Baldwin, *Raymond*, 62.
23. For bibliographical information on Reynald's capture and the relevant primary sources, in particular, Elisséeff, *Nur al-Din*, ii, 552.
24. When mentioning Reynald's release from prison, Ibn al-'Adim states briefly that Reynald had been in the citadel 'from the days of Nur al-Din'; Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubda*, ii, 532. The same reticence is shown by other Muslim sources: Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-a'yan*, tr. W. M. de Slane as *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary* (Paris, 1843–71), iv, 54; Ibn Shaddad, *al-Nawadir al-sultaniyya. Recueil des Historiens des Croisades: Historiens orientaux* (Paris, 1872–1906), iii, 63; Abu Shama, *Kitab al-rawdatayn, RHC, HO*, iv–v, 188. Bar Hebraeus follows this line too: Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography of Gregory Abu al-Faraj*, ed. and tr. E. A. W. Budge (London, 1932), 305.
25. A.-M. Eddé, *La Principauté Ayyoubide d'Alep (579/1183–658/1260)* (Stuttgart, 1999), 62, 111.
26. P.-V. Claverie, 'Le Statut des Templiers Capturés en Orient durant les Croisades' in G. Cipollane, *La Liberazione dei 'Captivi' tra Cristianità e Islam* (Vatican City, 2000), 503.
27. In 648/1250–1 St Louis was kept in custody in the house of a high-ranking chancery official in Cairo. He was 'put in chains and incarcerated in the house . . . in al-Mansura'. He was given a daily allowance and had his brother with him. As for the ordinary rank and file prisoners, they were executed at the rate of between 300 and 400 a night. See al-Maqrizi, *Kitab al-suluk*, tr. R. J. C. Broadhurst as *History of Ayyubids and Mamluks* (Boston, 1980), 308–9.
28. Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubda*, ii, 502; for a more detailed discussion of these earthquakes, see below.
29. Recent archaeological investigations, carried out at the Aleppo citadel by a team of German specialists and as yet unpublished, have revealed the existence

of rock-cut enclosures which may have served as dungeons. No firm date has been assigned to these but a twelfth-century dating seems possible. I am grateful to Dr Julia Gonella for this information.

30. A similar arrangement existed in Europe where prisoners were kept in a carcereal located under the lord's chambers or in smaller residences; H. Kleinschmidt, *Understanding the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2000), 274.
31. Eddé, *Principauté*, 277.
32. Ibn al-Shihna, *Les perles choisies d'Ibn Ach-Chihna*, tr. J. Sauvaget (Damascus, 1933); Eddé, *Principauté*, 294.
33. Detailed investigations of stone-dressing techniques can yield information about the provenance of the masons (e.g. the presence of Ionians in Achaemenid buildings in Fars is revealed by the marks left by their claw-toothed chisels). But such detailed studies of masonry techniques have yet to be carried out on a sufficiently large scale on the buildings of the medieval Near East. In the case of the Aleppo citadel, no such evidence is available (cf. Gonella's work). Hanisch's work on the Damascus citadel (*Abbildung*, viii, 205) shows a separate structure, entered by a deep staircase, situated right by the north-west tower. He suggested to me orally that this building might well have been used as dungeons. (For a study of this tower, see H. Hanisch, 'Der Nordwestturm der Zitadelle von Damaskus', in *Damaszene Mitteilungen* 5 (1991), 183–233.) No such self-standing structure seems to have been mentioned for the Aleppo citadel.
34. Jeremiah, 38: 6–12.
35. *Jubb* could denote a well but also came to mean a deep, dark dungeon or prison. Cf. R. P. A. Dozy, *Supplément aux Dictionnaires Arabes* (Leiden, 1881), i, 169.
36. Ibn Taymiyya, *Lettre à un roi croisé*, tr. J. Michot (Louvain, 1995), 73.
37. The Artuqid ruler Balak seized Baldwin of Antioch in 516/1122–3 or 517/1123–4 and imprisoned him in the pit (*jubb*) of Khartpert with Joscelin; al-'Azimi, 'La chronique abregée d'al-'Azimi', ed. C. Cahen, *Journal Asiatique* 230 (1938), 391–2.
38. Commentators define *sijjin* as a place where a record of the deeds of the wicked is kept, and also as the record itself. The term is also thought to denote hell-fire or the seventh and lowest earth where Iblis is chained. In general, the semantic link with *sijn* seems to have been made (*EI*², s.v. 'sidjdjin'). *Sajjan* denotes a jailer.
39. Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddima*, tr. F. Rosenthal (New York, 1958), i, 74.

40. The term *hajib* covered a wide range of responsibilities in different places and times in the medieval Islamic world, see *EI*^{2}, s.v. 'hadjib'.
41. *EI*^{2}, s.v. 'djandar'.
42. For a comprehensive discussion of the term *jandar* see E. Quatremère, *Histoire des Sultans Mamluks de l'Égypte* (Paris, 1837–45), 14–15, n. 15.
43. Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddima*, i, 17.
44. Eddé, *Principauté*, 251.
45. Eddé, *Principauté*, 334, refers to a tax of six dirhams payable by prisoners. It is not clear what kind of prisoners, Muslim and/or others, are meant here. According to al-Maqrizi, there were special quarters for Crusader prisoners who had been captured in Syrian lands and taken to Cairo. He states that in the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad b. Qala'un (ruled 693/1293–694/1294 and 698/1299–708/1309) such prisoners were housed in the *khizanat al-bunud*, which adjoined the great citadel and 'the prison there fell into disuse', al-Maqrizi, *Al-Khitat*, ed. K. al-Mansur (Beirut, 1998), ii, 318.
46. William, *History*, ii, 284.
47. Matthew, *Chronique*, 363.
48. Al-Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 60; Claverie, 'Statut', 502.
49. Al-Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 60.
50. Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubda*, ii, 575.
51. Eddé, *Principauté*, 301–2.
52. Al-Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 275.
53. Eddé cites such an example in connection with the Aleppo citadel; Eddé, *Principauté*, 111.
54. Ibn al-Mukarram, 'On conducting the affairs of state', tr. L. Fernandes, *Annales Islamologiques* 24 (1988), 84; quoted in C. Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (Edinburgh, 1999), 556.
55. Cited by Y. Friedman, 'The ransom of captives in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem', in M. Balard (ed.), *Autour de la Première Croisade* (Paris, 1996), 178, n. 5.
56. Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, 226.
57. Al-Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 60.
58. Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh al-duwal wa'l-muluk*, trs U. and M. C. Lyons as *Ayyubids, Mamluks and Crusaders* (Cambridge, 1971), ii, 45–6.
59. Gregory the Priest rails against 'the unheard-of inhumanity' of Nur al-Din; Matthew, *Chronique*, 350; cf. also Michael, *Chronique*, 316.
60. For full details of the terrible treatment received by Joscelin at the hands of

Nur al-Din, see R. L. Nicholson, *Joscelyn III and the Fall of the Crusader States 1134–1199* (Leiden, 1973), 21.

61. Hillenbrand, *Crusades*, 556.
62. Saladin, for example, used prisoners to fortify Acre in 584/1188–9, see al-Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 87.
63. Schlumberger, *Reynaud*, 159.
64. Eddé, *Principauté*, 455; Claverie, 'Statut', 507.
65. Claverie, 'Statut', 502.
66. Hamilton calls this an 'astronomical sum' and remarks that hostages must have been given to ensure its payment; Hamilton, *Leper King*, 105.
67. Hamilton, *Leper King*, 104–5.
68. Mary's marriage to the Byzantine emperor Manuel took place on 25 December 1161. R. Grousset, *Histoire des Croisades et du Royaume de Jerusalem* (Paris, 1934 and 1936), ii, 432; William, *History*, ii, 290, n. 87.
69. Quoted by Grousset, *Histoire*, ii, 470.
70. Nicholson argues that Nur al-Din only released prisoners under real pressure and that ordinary offers of ransom did not tempt him; Nicholson, *Joscelyn III*, 38.
71. Claverie, 'Statut', 502.
72. Claverie, 'Statut', 502; Matthew, *Chronique*, 355–6.
73. Claverie, 'Statut', 502.
74. Claverie, 'Statut', 506.
75. Hamilton comments in the context of the eventual release of Reynald and his stepson Joscelin III that Nur al-Din 'had steadfastly refused to set free' these two; Hamilton, *Leper King*, 103. Ehrenkreutz points out that it is ironical that Saladin's Syrian expedition brought about Reynald's release and he indirectly blames Saladin for bringing about this momentous event; Ehrenkreutz, *Saladin*, 144.
76. Al-'Azimi, *Chronique*, 392.
77. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat*, ii, 538.
78. Friedman, 'Ransom', 180–1.
79. Schlumberger, *Reynaud*, 158.
80. Sauvaget, *Alep*, i, 3.
81. Schlumberger suggests that 'Reynald's sole preoccupation would be to try to get himself ransomed'; Schlumberger, *Reynaud*, 158.
82. Friedman, 'Ransom', 187.
83. Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubda*, ii, 483; Ibn al-Athir, *Atabegs*, *RHC, HO*, 196.

84. Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubda*, ii, 502.
85. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat*, iv, 407.
86. Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubda*, ii, 483.
87. Ibn Shihna, *Perles*, 74; Elisséeff, *Nur al-Din*, ii, 714; Sauvaget, *Alep*, i, 119.
88. Nicholson, *Joscelyn III*, 37.
89. B. Keenan, 'An evil cradling', in *The Guardian Weekend*, 19 September 1992, 14.
90. Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, 324.
91. N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (London, 1994), 375–6.
92. Mandela, *Long Walk*, 440.
93. Stevenson, *Crusaders*, 214.
94. Baldwin, *Raymond*, 62.
95. There were instances of Franks apostatising to obtain release (Claverie, 'Statut', 510) but such conduct was not compatible with Reynald's character.
96. Schlumberger, *Reynaud*, 160.
97. Baldwin, *Raymond*, 62.
98. Hamilton, 'Elephant', 99; Barber argues that this may be taking the rehabilitation of Reynald a little too far, but that whatever his motives, 'almost alone among the Franks he was prepared to take the war to the Muslims, rather than simply waiting to be attacked'; M. Barber, 'Frontier warfare in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem: the campaign of Jacob's Ford, 1178–79' in J. France and W. G. Zajaz (eds), *The Crusades and their Sources: Essays presented to Bernard Hamilton* (Aldershot, 1998), 21.
99. *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*, ed. K. Fenwick (London, 1958), 23.
100. Peter of Blois, 'Passio Reginaldis Principis Antiocheni' in *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J. P. Migne (Paris, 1844–64), cols 957–76.

8

Some Reflections on the Use of the Qur'an in Monumental Inscriptions in Syria and Palestine in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries[1]

> You live in a transient world, with but a brief span of life. So forestall your latter end with the best deeds you can accomplish . . . Cast away this world where God has cast it, and seek that which is to come.[2]

Introduction

Any overall analysis of the use of Qur'anic quotations in monumental epigraphy is fraught with pitfalls. Accidents of survival, the size of the sample chosen and other problems discourage generalisations. The scattered inscriptions which *have* survived may present an incomplete or misleading picture of a much more complex situation which is now, after the passage of so many centuries, impossible to reconstruct. Moreover, if a given area of the medieval Islamic world is taken in isolation from others, the conclusions drawn may well be skewed. Similarly, to take a limited period of time, ignoring the evidence of what precedes and follows it, will also produce faulty conclusions.

Moreover, the study of how the Qur'an is used in monumental inscriptions is still at a very rudimentary stage. The sheer size of the medieval Islamic world and the number of extant monuments make such a task extremely daunting. Dodd and Khairallah have made a number of grandiose and exciting statements about Qur'anic inscriptions on monuments in their book, arguing that layers and layers of meaning lie beneath the surface, layers which scholars must uncover and interpret. Indeed, they suggest that such inscriptions correspond to icons and images in Christian churches. Having

promised a great deal, they failed to extract much from their evidence[3] and indeed to prove their own hypotheses. In any case, their sample was seriously flawed, since it contained very few inscriptions from Turkey, Central Asia and Iran. Blair's criticisms of the book are very telling and à propos.[4] On the other hand, Hoyland's recent article shows what can be done when the material is treated in a more innovative and analytical manner.[5]

In the preparation of this article an extensive trawl was made through the corpus of extant monumental Muslim inscriptions recorded for Syria and Palestine in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The sources used were the *Répertoire*[6] together with van Berchem's Jerusalem inscriptions,[7] the work of Ecochard and Sauvaget on Ayyubid Damascus[8] and the additional inscriptions published recently by Sharon.[9] The aim here has been to reflect on the factors dictating the selection of Qur'anic quotations used in this body of inscriptions. Many approaches to this important area of research are possible.[10] The interest of this particular enquiry, however, centres on a limited body of inscriptions. Given that the area and period are both well defined, it may well be possible to test in this way how Qur'anic inscriptions are used in monumental epigraphy. The results may, as Hoyland recently pointed out,[11] raise more questions than answers, but they will be of interest, whether they are positive or negative. If negative, they will at least constitute a warning not to leap to the conclusion that Qur'anic inscriptions are necessarily significant in a given time, place and location on a building, tombstone or other object. If positive, it may be plausible to argue that, *sometimes* at least, Qur'anic quotations were chosen with deliberation and that interpretations as to why they were selected may be teased from the evidence.

An Analysis of Qur'anic Quotations in Inscriptions on Four Twelfth- and Thirteenth-century Islamic Monuments

a. The Tomb of Safwat al-Mulk in Damascus[12]

This monument housed the mortal remains of Safwat al-Mulk, a Seljuq princess, who was the wife of Atabeg Tughtegin and the mother of Duqaq. Duqaq ruled Damascus between 488/1095 and 497/1104. The monument was situated to the west of the city on a high place looking down on the Green Hippodrome. Duqaq died in 497/1104. Before his death his mother

persuaded him to appoint her husband Tughtegin[13] as ruler of Damascus. According to the local chronicler, Ibn al-Qalanisi, Safwat al-Mulk died at the end of Jumada I 513/8 September 1119 and was buried with her son in the *qubba* which she had built.[14]

Ecochard and Sauvaget deciphered some of the inscriptions despite their mutilated state. What they managed to read may be translated as follows:

> In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. '*God and His angels bless the Prophet: o you who believe, bless him and call down peace upon him.*'[15] God Most Great has spoken the truth. Praise be to God for His benefits, and may God bless Muhammad and His family.

Sadly, this monument no longer exists.[16] Its inscriptions must have been very striking indeed: Ecochard and Sauvaget describe them as painted in cobalt blue (mixed with some touches of black), pure in tone and with extraordinarily intense colouring.

In the notes to his partial translation of the chronicle of Ibn al-Qalanisi, Gibb calls Safwat al-Mulk 'energetic and intriguing'.[17] Perhaps, as was often the case, this Turkish princess had her own budget and was thus able to build a funerary structure for herself and her son. She was a typical *valide sultan*. As Mouton points out, the mother–son relationship was often crucial in the exercise of power, and, even in death, princes liked to be buried near their mother, thus demonstrating the supremacy of filial ties over those of marriage.[18]

On the face of it, the Qur'anic quotation which adorned this tomb – Sura 33: 56 – does not provide many clues as to why it was chosen. Ecochard and Sauvaget do not express curiosity on this point. The verse calls down blessings on the Prophet. According to the sample taken by Dodd and Khairallah, this is a verse which was widely used in inscriptions,[19] starting with the Dome of the Rock[20] and being chosen for a variety of monumental types.

However, when the context of Sura 33: 56 is examined more closely, it is revealing to note that the preceding verse (33: 55) speaks to women directly:

> O women! Keep your duty to God. Lo! God is Witness over all things.

The verse also mentions women being allowed to converse freely with men within the permitted degrees of relationship. The verses following 33: 56

give instruction on decorous clothing for women, and the sura ends with the reassurance:

> God pardons believing men and women, and God is Forgiving, Merciful.

Thus the juxtaposition of the Qur'anic verse chosen to adorn the tomb of Safwat al-Mulk with these other neighbouring verses specifically mentioning pious women tends to suggest that this choice of Qur'anic quotation was deliberate. It is highly suitable for the tomb of a royal woman; anyone reading the inscription would know the sura from which it comes and the main tenor of it. The message of the text chosen for the actual inscription is universal; there is no overt attempt here to particularise women. But the proximity of the verses about women on either side of the verse would be remembered too. It is certainly also worth noting that two other monuments erected in women's names, one of which is the mausoleum of the redoubtable Mamluk queen, Shajar al-Durr, who ruled briefly in her own right, bear this same inscription.[21]

b. The Madrasa Salahiyya in Jerusalem (Saladin's Madrasa)

The Shafi'ite madrasa, founded in Jerusalem by Saladin and known as the Madrasa Salahiyya, bears a foundation inscription dated 588/1192.[22] As van Berchem suggests, the madrasa is one of the monuments associated with Saladin after his reconquest of Jerusalem in 583/1187. When Jerusalem was under Crusader occupation, the building was the Church of St Anne and Saladin was quick to convert it into a Shafi'ite madrasa. Van Berchem gives a thorough survey of the primary sources which deal with this event. He mentions that several days after the capture of Jerusalem a council of *'ulama'* decided to found a Shafi'ite madrasa and chose the Church of St Anne for it. It is clear, however, that when Saladin came back to Jerusalem in 588/1192 the Salahiyya was not yet completed.[23]

The inscription, consisting of five lines, runs as follows:

> In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful. *And whatever favours you have received are certainly from God.*[24] This blessed madrasa was founded as a *waqf* by our master al-Malik al-Nasir, Salah al-Dunya wa'l-Din, the sultan of Islam and the Muslims, Abu'l-Muzaffar Yusuf b. Ayyub b. Shadhi, the revitaliser of the state of the Commander of the Faithful – may God

> glorify his victories and assemble for him the good of this world and of the next – for the legists from the followers of the *imam* Abu ʿAbdallah Muhammad b. Idris al-Shafiʿi – may God be pleased with him – in the year 588.[25]

The Qur'anic quotation found in this inscription, part of Sura 16: 53, is very short and is given pride of place right at the beginning after the *bismillah*. This quotation may be seen as a reference to God's special beneficence towards Saladin. Van Berchem remarks that the Qur'anic quotation is an allusion to the favour (*niʿma*) God is bestowing on Saladin in allowing him to establish this pious foundation.[26] This is surely too timid an interpretation for the rare use of this particular Qur'anic verse in a monumental inscription. The timing of this monument, soon after the two events which formed the climax of Saladin's career – the victory at Hattin and the reconquest of the Holy City – would seem to suggest that the Qur'anic quotation is a reminder of these great victories. Indeed, Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad, Saladin's biographer, speaks of Hattin as a 'blessing for the Muslims' and states that the sultan saw the favour (*niʿma*) of God towards him.[27] Such a short Qur'anic quotation thus serves its purpose well. The word *niʿma* must have been on everyone's lips. Ibn Zaki's famous sermon preached on Saladin's entry into Jerusalem includes the following lines:

> How great a favour (*niʿma*) was that which rendered you the army by whose hands the Sacred City was recaptured.[28]

This choice of a quotation from Sura 16 (the Sura of the Bee) is apposite in other respects, since those well versed in the Qur'an would remember its allusions to Paradise[29] and to God's goodness in creation.[30] In particular, verse 71 declares that God has favoured some above others in provision, a direct allusion to God's particular kindnesses bestowed on Saladin.

It is interesting to note that, according to Dodd and Khairallah,[31] this Qur'anic quotation is used only twice, once on the Aqsa mosque in 583/1187, in the very year of the reconquest and the other on Saladin's madrasa.

c. The Masjid al-Nasr at Bayt Hanun

The mosque of the village of Bayt Hanun to the north of Gaza is now called Jamiʿ al-nabi Hanun but its original name, as recorded on the inscription over its gate, was Masjid al-Nasr (the Victory Mosque).[32]

The foundation inscription dated 14 Rabiʿ II 637/13 November 1239 contains five lines and reads as follows[33]

> In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. He only shall tend God's sanctuaries who believes in God and the Last Day and observes proper worship and pays the poor-due and fears none save God. The construction of this blessed mosque was ordered by the most illustrious amir, the great *isfahsalar*, the warrior, the one who fights Holy War, the one who perseveres assiduously on the frontier, the defender of the marches, Shams al-Din Sunqur, the former *mihmandar* for al-Malik al-Kamil and [al-Malik] al-ʿAdil, on the occasion of the defeat of the Franks – may God fail to help them (*khadhalahum Allah*) – at Bayt Hanun on Sunday half way through Rabiʿ II of the year 637, and he called it the Victory Mosque. Beside it are those of his companions who were martyred in the battle. He built it out of desire for God's favour. May God have mercy on those who read it (the inscription) and who ask for mercy and forgiveness for him and for all the Muslims and for the scribe who is needful of God's help, Muhammad b. Hamdan b. ʿUqayl al-Ansari, the writer (of this inscription?).

This is a very interesting inscription in a Crusading context. Sharon gives the historical background to the battle mentioned in the inscription and it will not be rehearsed again here. It is important, however, to note the use of a phrase of ritual cursing against the Franks (*khadhalahum Allah*) in a monumental inscription. This device, which is frequently found in the Muslim chronicles from the time of Ibn al-Qalanisi onwards,[34] is rarely found in monumental form and it makes a powerful impact here, recording for posterity a lasting malediction against the Franks.

On the face of it, there is nothing exceptional in the choice of Qur'anic quotation for this inscription. Sura 9: 18 enjoyed widespread popularity over many centuries and is a verse hallowed by tradition.[35] It is found particularly, but by no means exclusively, on mosques, and it is used as the foundation

inscription, commonly over doorways.[36] It could thus easily be argued that the reason the verse was chosen at Bayt Hanun was its obvious link with the establishment of a mosque.

Other factors, however, conspire to make 9: 18 particularly suitable for this inscription, which commemorates a victory by Shams al-Din Sunqur over the Franks. It is worth remembering the cluster of Qur'anic verses around 9: 18. These would be well known to those who read the inscription. Verses 13–17 speak of the terrible fate awaiting idolators, who will burn in the Fire, whilst verses 29–35 launch extremely fierce attacks on Jews and Christians. The message to be gleaned from the proximity of these verses, most apposite in the particular context of a Muslim victory against the Franks in 637/1239, is further highlighted by another skilful juxtaposition, namely that of Sura 9: 18 itself, with its promise of blessing, and the formal epigraphic cursing of the Franks. The verses immediately following 9: 18 promise Paradise to the faithful, thus alluding to the reward awaiting those who wage jihad in the path of God against the infidel. The Bayt Hanun inscription, moreover, mentions those companions of the mosque's founder who were martyred in the battle.

It might therefore be argued that the choice of the Qur'anic quotation for this inscription, far from being conventional or even random, is especially felicitous in the particular historical context in which it was made, a context in which jihad is being waged in the heart of traditional Muslim territory.

The prestige of the whole of Sura 9 is well known. It is singled out by Muslim commentators as being the final part of the Qur'an, a very important valedictory chapter revealed just before Muhammad's death. Sura 9: 18 stresses the strict observance of Islamic principles. Those who read it would also be aware of the portentous and thought-provoking final phrase of this verse (omitted in this inscription) – *fa'asa ula'ika an yakunu min al-muhtadin*, 'these perhaps may become of the number of those who are rightly guided'.[37]

This is a solemn warning that, even *with* the performance of true religion, salvation is not necessarily assured. Qur'anic commentators dwell in their treatment of 9: 18 on the context in which it was revealed and they relate it to the *masjid al-haram* at Mecca.[38] Yet God's righteous anger against the pagan Meccans may also be interpreted to apply to similar miscreants in subsequent ages. In this case, it is the infidel Franks who have occupied God's sanctuar-

ies. Thus a venerated, universally relevant Qur'anic quotation may have a special message in a particular epoch, as in this case with the invading alien presence of the Crusaders.

d. The Mausoleum of Barakat (Berke) Khan in Jerusalem

This monument in Jerusalem bears a funerary inscription dated 644/1246. It was published for the first time by van Berchem.[39] The inscription on a marble slab above the window is seven lines long and reads as follows:

> In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful. Everyone that is thereon will pass away; there remains but the countenance of thy Lord of Might and Glory.[40] Our Lord! We believe in that which Thou hast revealed and we follow him whom Thou hast sent. Enrol us among those who bear witness.[41] Our Lord! And give us that which Thou hast promised to us by Thy messengers. Confound us not upon the Day of Resurrection. Lo! Thou breakest not the tryst.[42] O My slaves who have been prodigal to their own hurt! Despair not of the mercy of God, Who forgives all sins. Lo! He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.[43] This is the mausoleum of the slave needful of God's mercy and pardon, Barakat Khan – may God illumine his grave. He died on Friday, 1 Muharram 644. May God pardon him and his parents and those who pray for pardon for him. Amen. Lord of the worlds. And may God bless our master Muhammad and his family and his companions and grant them salvation. Pure we have come from the void and impure we have become. Peacefully we entered (the world) and full of care we have become. We were formed from black earth, fire and water. We have returned to earth.

This is an inscription in the name of a bloodthirsty and cordially hated warlord, the Khwarazmian military commander, Husam al-Din Barakat (Berke) Khan, who was at the head of 10,000 Khwarazmians responsible for the infamous capture and sacking of Jerusalem in 642/1244. That same year he was killed at the battle of Hims; his head was taken to Aleppo and displayed on the gate of the citadel. The Ayyubid chronicler, Ibn Wasil, accords Berke Khan no obituary and speaks instead of the great suffering the country had endured because of the 'plundering, rapine, shedding of blood and violation of sacred things' committed by the Khwarazmians.[44]

How then could it have come about that this scourge of the Muslims, whose bloodthirsty conduct shocked his contemporaries, should have a cenotaph with an elaborate inscription in his name in that same city of Jerusalem, the Holy City, which he had so savagely sacked?

Van Berchem believes that the mausoleum was built either by the Ayyubid ruler al-Malik al-Salih Ayyub, who had allied himself in marriage to Berke Khan, or even later by one of the daughters of Berke Khan who had married none other than the great Mamluk sultan Baybars. Clearly, only high-level sponsorship could have allowed such a personage as Berke Khan to be commemorated in Jerusalem. Filial piety could well have carried the day.[45]

This is an unusually intricate and sophisticated inscription. It contains four separate Qur'anic quotations. It is meticulously structured. It is striking that almost half this long inscription consists of Qur'anic quotations. Unlike the inscription in Saladin's name, discussed above, where the Qur'anic inscription is only the grace note of a panegyric text about Saladin, here the Qur'an dominates the inscription. The normal commemorative aspect of the life and deeds of the deceased person in whose name the inscription is written recedes right into the background here. The reader is given only the name and the date of death. There are no grandiose titles. But the name Berke Khan speaks volumes.

The inscription is both a prayer and a sermon. Suras 3: 53, 3: 194 and 39: 53 express the hope of Divine mercy, even towards those who have committed terrible deeds. Sura 55: 26–7 is a solemn reminder that all must perish, a message which is re-echoed in the Persian poetic lines which provide a fitting conclusion. Van Berchem remarks that in this inscription one senses the anguish of remorse and the fear of the Last Judgement.[46]

There is a beautiful symmetry in this inscription, beginning in Arabic and ending in Persian[47] with a moving evocation of the brevity of man's mortal span. Bilingual inscriptions in Arabic and Persian, such as this one, are extremely rare in medieval times, and this seems to be the only example in medieval Jerusalem. The Persian lines reinforce the Qur'anic message: all must die and return to the earth, there to await God's judgement. The use of Persian is an evocative allusion to the distant lands of Khwarazm far away to the east whence this barbaric warrior had come. Of course, he himself was a

Turk, but now was not the time for the writing of monumental inscriptions in any Turkic dialects or koine. The words of 'Umar Khayyam must suffice to intone in the poetic language of distant Central Asia the dreadful warning of the fragility of man's existence and of God's retribution and justice.

General Reflections

Even this analysis of a small number of Qur'anic quotations on a limited group of monumental inscriptions can present problems, not least of synchronicity. Indeed, it may be foolhardy to suggest that particular Qur'anic inscriptions were used to allude to specific events or persons. In the case of the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Levant, did those who built or commissioned monuments deliberately choose certain Qur'anic quotations with a specific agenda, for example, to commemorate a victory against the Franks or to record Islam's superiority over Christianity? Or was the repertoire of Qur'anic quotations on buildings long fixed throughout the Islamic world, thus rendering specific contextual analyses inappropriate and ultimately fruitless? The four detailed examples analysed above will now be discussed in the light of these questions.

Not surprisingly, the incidence of synecdochism is widespread. The Qur'an is very well known, much better known than any other book in the Islamic world, and it is often known *in toto*. This means that, while for reasons of space and positioning those who planned the building sometimes had to economise on the length of quotations, even a short Qur'anic excerpt could suffice. If well chosen, such a quotation will have both a pre-echo and a post-echo. The actual inscription on a building can be likened in its impact to the tip of an iceberg, of whose weight and mass contemporary readers would have been well aware. Thus the choice of the Qur'anic quotation for the inscription on the tomb of Safwat al-Mulk is a clear example of synecdoche.

Generalisations about the use of certain Qur'anic verses to suit particular building types are dangerous. It should be borne in mind that certain Qur'anic verses enjoyed long-standing popularity in monumental inscriptions throughout the medieval Islamic world and on a wide variety of types of monument. Sura 9: 18 stands out as one such verse.[48] Because of its ubiquity, it is more difficult to postulate that its selection for the mosque at Bayt Hanun was a deliberate decision dictated by contemporary circumstances.

However, the more one delves into the matter, the more likely it becomes. It too is an example of synecdoche.

The verse used in the inscription on Saladin's madrasa in Jerusalem (and also on the Aqsa Mosque in the same period) is a clear case of a particular Qur'anic message being chosen almost as Saladin's trademark in the Holy City.

Finally, nobody can be in any doubt that the series of Qur'anic inscriptions on the cenotaph of Berke Khan were chosen with the utmost care and didactic purpose, to serve as a warning (*'ibra*) not just to the person commemorated but also to humanity at large.

The problem of limiting the enquiry to the *actual* words of the inscription is that the all-important Qur'anic context within which the inscription is set is apt to be lost or undervalued. Of course, it is important to assemble the occurrences, locations, periods and building types which saw a given Qur'anic inscription being used. But it must be emphasised that this is only the start of the enquiry. It is only when the entire range of meanings traditionally associated with a given verse, and indeed its parent sura, are investigated that such inscriptions are liable to yield their full value. Thus the focus of scholarship must shift from mere epigraphy to Qur'anic studies, the latter modulated by the particular circumstances of an inscription. One may hope that the examples chosen here have made a modest beginning in this respect.

Notes

1. Dedication – This short piece is affectionately dedicated to my esteemed friend and colleague Alan Jones, a devoted teacher who instilled in us all his fascination with Arabic. It is in his honour that I have strayed a little from my usual areas of research in search of a subject which I hope will interest him.
2. From the *khutba al-wilaya* of the caliph 'Uthman, tr. A. F. L. Beeston, *Samples of Arabic Prose* (Oxford, 1977), 7.
3. E. C. Dodd and S. Khairallah, *The Image of the Word*, 2 vols (Beirut, 1981).
4. S. Blair, review of E. C. Dodd and S. Khairallah, *The Image of the Word*, Beirut, 1981, *Arabica* 31/3 (1984), 337–42.
5. R. Hoyland, 'The content and context of early Arabic inscriptions', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 21 (1997), 77–102.

6. E. Combe, J. Sauvaget and G. Wiet, *Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arabe*, vols 8–12 (Cairo, 1937–43).
7. M. van Berchem, *Matériaux pour un corpus inscriptionum arabicarum. Deuxième partie. Syrie du Sud, vol. 1, Jérusalem 'Ville'* (Cairo, 1922).
8. M. Ecochard, J. Sauvaget et al., *Les monuments ayyoubides de Damas* (Paris, 1938–45).
9. M. Sharon, *Corpus inscriptionum arabicarum Palaestinae* (Leiden, 1999).
10. Cf. R. Hillenbrand, 'Qur'anic epigraphy in medieval Islamic architecture', *Revue des études islamiques* LIV (1986), 171–87; Y. Tabbaa, *Constructions of Power and Piety in Medieval Aleppo* (College Park, PA, 1997), 170–2; R. Hoyland, 'The content and context', 77–102.
11. Hoyland, 'The content and context', 96.
12. For a detailed description of the monument, cf. M. Ecochard and J. Sauvaget, 'Le tombeau de Safwat al-Mulk', *Les monuments ayyoubides*, issue 1 (1938), 1–13. The legible parts of the inscription are given on p. 6.
13. Duqaq's father, Tutush, had given Safwat al-Mulk in marriage to Tughtegin; cf. Ibn al-Qalanisi, *Dhayl ta'rikh Dimashq*, tr. H. A. R. Gibb as *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades* (London, 1932), 62. Cf. also C. Alptekin, *Dimask Atabegligi* (Istanbul, 1985), 20–1.
14. Ibn al-Qalanisi, *Dhayl ta'rikh Dimashq*, ed. H. F. Amedroz (Leiden, 1908), 201. This passage was not translated by Gibb.
15. Sura 33: 56.
16. Fortunately, Ecochard and Sauvaget provide full photographic documentation of this building and some excellent drawings of the inscription.
17. Gibb, *The Damascus Chronicle*, 24.
18. J.-M. Mouton, *Damas et sa principauté sous les Saljoucides et les Bourides 468–549/1076–1154* (Cairo, 1994), 178.
19. Dodd and Khairallah, *The Image*, II, 97–9. It does not occur in Blair's sample of inscriptions from the Iranian world; cf. S. S. Blair, *The Monumental Inscriptions from Early Islamic Iran and Transoxiana* (Leiden, 1992).
20. Hoyland, 'The content and context', 80.
21. Dodd and Khairallah, *The Image*, II, 98–9.
22. M. van Berchem, *Matériaux pour un corpus*, 91–5.
23. Ibid., 94.
24. The Sale translation seems more apt here (cf. *The Koran*, tr. G. Sale (London, 1734), 198).
25. Van Berchem, *Matériaux pour un corpus*, 91–2.

26. Ibid., 91, n. 4: 'avec une allusion à la faveur (*ni'ma*) qu'Allah fait à Saladin en lui permettant de fonder cette oeuvre pie'.
27. Cf. Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad, *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin*, tr. D. S. Richards (Aldershot, 2001), 72; *Recueil des historiens des Croisades: Historiens orientaux*, III (Paris, 1884), 92.
28. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-a'yan*, tr. W. M. de Slane as *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary* (Paris, 1843–71), II, 638; Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-a'yan*, ed. I. 'Abbas (Beirut, n.d.), IV, 232.
29. vv. 30–1.
30. vv. 3–18.
31. Dodd and Khairallah, *The Image*, II, 68.
32. This inscription was published by Sharon, *Corpus inscriptionum*, II, 98–104.
33. Ibid., 99. Sharon's words have been changed in a few places and Pickthall's translation has been preferred to that of Bell. 'Allah' used in English by Pickthall has been replaced by 'God'.
34. For a recent discussion of such formulaic expressions, cf. N. Christie, 'The origins of suffixed invocations of God's curse on the Franks in Muslim sources for the Crusades', *Arabica* XLVIII (2001), 254–66.
35. Blair calls it 'the most common inscription on mosques' (*The Monumental Inscriptions*, 39).
36. Dodd and Khairallah, *The Image*, I, 74.
37. According to al-Baydawi, these words are a warning both to believers against having too great a trust in their own merits, and to unbelievers too. If the faithful *perhaps* will receive the joys of Paradise, what hope is there for unbelievers? Al-Baydawi *apud* Sale, *The Koran*, 136, note p.
38. Cf. for example, Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'azim*, II (Beirut, 1969), 340–1. According to al-Baydawi, the four main points made by 'Ali, who was deputed to carry this revelation to the people of Mecca, were its prohibition of idolators near the Ka'ba, the forbidding of circumambulation around it by naked men, the statement that only true believers would enter Paradise and the injunction that public faith should be upheld.
39. Van Berchem, *Matériaux pour un corpus*, 185–90; cf. also *RCEA*, XI, no. 4254, 169–70.
40. Sura 55: 26–7. Wiet comments on the appropriateness of this verse for epitaphs: G. Wiet, 'Stèles coufiques d'Égypte et du Soudan', *Journal asiatique* 240 (1952), 291.
41. Sura 3: 53.

42. Sura 3: 194.
43. Sura 39: 53.
44. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij al-kurub*, ed. H. Rabie and S. Ashur (Cairo, 1977), vol. 5, 359.
45. Van Berchem, *Matériaux pour un corpus*, 187, n. 2.
46. There is another short inscription on the cenotaph (no. 60, Van Berchem, *Matériaux pour un corpus*, 188) which tells the same story. It also contains 55: 26–7 and asks for God's pardon on Berke Khan, his parents and all Muslims.
47. The Persian *ruba'i* seems to be a variant of one by 'Umar Khayyam; cf. 'Umar Khayyam, *Kulliyat athar Hakim 'Umar Khayyam*, ed. M. 'Abbasi (Tehran, 1338), 157. I am extremely grateful to Alireza Anisi and 'Abdullah Ghouchani for spending much effort in tracking down this reference for me.
48. Sura 2: 255 (the Throne Verse) is another very popular choice.

9

The Legacy of the Crusades

Crusading in the Western Imagination

Despite having lost the Holy Land, Europeans did not forget the Crusades; and memories of this momentous interlude in their history remained, even after the Ottoman empire had ceased to pose a real threat to Europe. Many European perceptions of Muslims and the Muslim world were rooted in the Crusading experience and Europe created myths and ideals based on it.

Napoleon's Egyptian campaign of 1798 may be taken as a key moment in the growth of orientalism in Europe and of scholarly interest in the Crusades. Thereafter, the academic study of the Crusades began in earnest, and the sixteen volumes of the *Recueil des historiens des Croisades* produced (1841–1906) in France by the august Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, were a monument to nineteenth-century scholarship. Unlike earlier luminaries of the Enlightenment, such as Voltaire, Gibbon and Hume, who had criticised Crusading as irrational fanaticism, nineteenth-century scholars had a more positive attitude.[1]

But imaginative fiction was more influential than historiography in moulding public perceptions of the Crusades. Torquato Tasso's epic poem of the First Crusade, *Gerusalemme Liberata* (1581), was a particularly rich resource for nineteenth-century creative artists. The romantic lure of the Crusades became a potent source of inspiration for many novelists, playwrights, poets, musicians and artists, who portrayed the Crusaders as the flower of medieval European chivalry in conflict with an exotic Muslim

Figure 9.1 *The Battle between King Richard I and Saladin* by Philip James (Jacques) de Loutherbourg (1740–1812)

enemy. The Crusades could also be seen to epitomise, and indeed to intensify, the epic struggle between Christianity and Islam that had begun in the seventh century.

Benjamin Disraeli (1804–81), the British prime minister and novelist, visited the tombs of the Crusader kings in 1831, and the Near East was a setting for several of his novels. Artists such as David Roberts, Edward Lear and Jean-Léon Gérome painted the Holy Land; other painters depicted Crusader subjects. Rossini and Verdi, among others, composed operas in Crusader settings. Poets such as Lamartine and Nerval evoked the Crusader settings. Poets such as Lamartine and Nerval evoked the Orient. William Wordsworth wrote four sonnets about the Crusades.

Figure 9.2 *The Return from the Crusade*, by Carl Friedrich Lessing (1808–80)

Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832) deserves special attention in this context. Although he criticised the Crusades in his *Essay on Chivalry* published in 1818, his attitude towards them was generally romantic. Of his four popular novels with Crusader backgrounds, *The Talisman* (1825) was especially

Figure 9.3 *The Damascus Gate, Jerusalem*, by David Roberts (1839)

famous. Scott's depiction of Saladin drew on a literary tradition stretching back to medieval times, idealising him with a blend of orientalist fantasy and chivalric legend. Scott contrasts, albeit with Eurocentric condescension, 'the Christian and English monarch' Richard the Lionheart, who showed 'all the cruelty of an Eastern [sovereign]', and Saladin, 'who displayed the deep policy and prudence of a European sovereign'.

Notwithstanding Scott, it was probably paintings that most influenced the Victorian public's imagination. Paintings worked on multiple levels, some obvious, some perhaps only subliminal. They treat much more than the Crusades as a historical phenomenon. They are about pride in national heritage; bringing the cross to the heathen; imperial claims to distant lands; the lure of the exotic; romanticism; and the mystique of the Middle Ages. All these themes resonated in nineteenth-century British society – and their echoes reverberate to this day. In Victorian England and elsewhere, pictures reached a wider public than did any scholarly account of the Crusades.[2]

In the nineteenth century the foremost ruler of the world's Muslims was Queen Victoria. Imperial expansion by Britain, France, Germany and other

European states in non-Christian regions was inevitably accompanied by Christian missions undertaking, as the title of a popular British series of books proclaimed, the *Conquests of the Cross*. European nationalism also brought to the fore Crusading heroes such as Louis IX (St Louis) in France, Richard the Lionheart in England, and Frederick Barbarossa in Germany. Belgium, established only in 1830, proudly commemorated Godfrey of Bouillon.

Crusading imagery was used in connection with the First World War. Some commentators saw it as a 'war to end all wars', depicting it as a conflict between cultures, fought to contain German militarism. Despite the horrendous loss of life, some clergy saw it as a crusade to defend freedom and to liberate the Holy Places from the control of Germany's Muslim ally, the Ottoman empire. Basil Bourchier, a British clergyman, wrote: 'Not only is this a holy war. It is the holiest war that has ever been waged . . . [The pagan god] Odin is ranged against Christ. Berlin is seeking to prove its supremacy over Bethlehem.' In 1916 the British premier, David Lloyd George, declared in a speech: 'Young men from every quarter of the country flocked to the standard of international right, as to a great crusade.' When the British commander General Allenby took Jerusalem from the Turks in December 1917, the magazine *Punch* published a cartoon entitled *The Last Crusade*, depicting Richard the Lionheart looking down on Jerusalem and saying, 'At last my dream come true'.

Crusading ancestry was a source of pride and was echoed in family heraldic devices in Britain, France and elsewhere. Attempts were made in the nineteenth century to revive the Knights Templar, but calls for the Order of St John (the Knights Hospitaller) to return to its military role and help free the Holy Land from the Muslim Ottoman empire had little impact. Instead, the order successfully reverted to its original role of caring for the sick and needy.

Crusading imagery was applied to contemporary political situations, despite a lack of historical verisimilitude; thus the Crimean War (1854–6) was seen as a kind of crusade for the custodianship of the Holy Places, although France and Britain fought on the side of the ailing Ottoman empire against Christian Russia.

Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany (1888–1918) visited the Near East in 1898 and in Jerusalem saw a recently established German Templar colony. In Damascus, in a carefully orchestrated act, he placed a bronze wreath on Saladin's tomb. The wreath (seized as a trophy during the First World War

by T. E. Lawrence, 'Lawrence of Arabia', and now in London) is ornately decorated with Arabic inscriptions, some from of the Qur'an and one that mentions Saladin by name.

Crusade imagery was also exploited by both sides in the Spanish Civil War, and by General Dwight D. Eisenhower in the Second World War. On 6 June 1944, at the beginning of Operation Crusader, the Allied invasion of Europe, he declared: 'Soldiers, sailors, and airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, you are about to embark on a great crusade.' In the nineteenth century, the metaphorical use of crusade to mean the pursuit of a worthy cause had become widespread, building on Thomas Jefferson's phrase 'crusade against ignorance'. But Eisenhower claimed to use the term literally: 'Only by the destruction of the Axis was a decent world possible; the war became for me a crusade in the traditional sense of that often misused word' (*Crusade in Europe*, 1948).

The symbolism of the Crusades was, therefore, versatile. For the artists of Romanticism the Crusades provided a rich vein of inspiration – acts of courage in a 'just war' in the exotic East, the emotional homecoming of the Crusader, and so on. Nationalists could adopt and celebrate individual

Figure 9.4 *The Taking of Jerusalem by the Crusaders, 15th July 1099*, by Emile Signol (1804–92)

Crusading heroes, while contemporary political and military situations called forth Crusading analogies.

Yet the Crusades have not always been a source of inspiration, as the attitudes of Voltaire, Hume, and other eighteenth-century luminaries demonstrate. Some Christians have been assailed by a sense of guilt; for example, Sir Steven Runciman described the Crusades as ‘a tragic and destructive episode’. More recently, the ‘Reconciliation Walk’, led in 1999 by an American child in the build-up to the 900th anniversary of the fall of Jerusalem in 1099, distributed a written statement: ‘We deeply regret the atrocities committed in the name of Christ by our predecessors.’

Islamic Responses to the West

The Islamic world reacted to Western imperialism and colonisation in a variety of ways. The Egyptian scholar ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti (1754–1825), considered by many as the first voice of the modern Arab renaissance, wrote two contemporary accounts of Napoleon’s occupation of Egypt in 1798. He attacked the French for the materialist ethos of their revolution but following the expulsion of the French and the return of the Ottomans, he criticised Muslim society and expressed admiration for European science.

Nineteenth-century Muslim intellectuals fell broadly into two groups. Those who embraced the challenge of modernisation and western scientific ideas, the ‘modernists’ as they came to be called, such as Indian educationalist and jurist Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817–98), who tried to integrate the advances of Western science and technology into Islam. Others, the ‘traditionalists’, epitomised by the Wahhabi movement in what is now Saudi Arabia, turned inwards and sought a return to the pristine values of early Islam, a society uncontaminated by external, above all European, influences and based only on the principles of the Qur’an and Hadith.

In the twentieth century, as European imperialism gave way to United States hegemony, the response of traditionalists was the same. Extremist groups with an Islamic platform, such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, struggled against all corrupt rulers in order to establish a unified Muslim state on Earth. Their leading ideologue, Sayyid Qutb (1906–66), who was executed for treason by President Nasser, spoke of the age-old confrontation between Islam and ‘polytheists’– including Christians, Hindus and Communists.

Qutb was influenced by the prolific Indian writer Sayyid Abu'l-A'la Mawdudi (1903–79), whose work has been seminal among radicals trained in the religious colleges (madrasas) of Pakistan, and notably among the Taliban in Afghanistan. The concept of jihad plays a paramount role in Mawdudi's thinking. His book *Jihad in Islam* has gone through many editions; the fifth has on its cover the word jihad written as a calligraphic blood-red sword. For Mawdudi, Islam is not concerned with one nation to the exclusion of others; he stresses the universality of Islam, since 'Islam wants the whole Earth'.

Nowadays jihad is an overused word; but it can serve as a powerful rallying cry against perceived forces of aggression and interference. For some, the call for jihad has a specific political focus, such as Palestine. Other Muslim pressure groups take a strongly ethical stance against America's global economic as well as political domination; hence the recently instituted 'jihad against Coca Cola', an attempt to undermine the product which symbolises the United States around the world. Two rival Muslim companies, Mecca Cola and Qibla Cola, declare that they give the statutory 10 per cent of their income, as decreed by Islam, to Muslim good causes.

But not all the rhetoric has an exclusively religious basis. Saddam Husayn's absolutist secular regime in Iraq fabricated an eclectic array of myths to bolster its fragile ideological base, and it spoke of the necessity for a great battle against the 'American–Israeli conspiracy'. Despite his clear lack of religious credentials, Saddam called on occasion for jihad against the West.

Modern Muslims have rediscovered and reinterpreted the Crusades, which retrospectively provide powerful symbols for their politicians. According to such thinking, the Crusader states were 'proto-colonies', prefiguring Napoleon's Egyptian expedition, the mandate period after 1918 (when Britain and France occupied Arab territories of the former Ottoman empire under League of Nations mandates), and, above all, the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. Arab nationalists and nationalist movements have evoked the victorious struggle of Muslim rulers against the Franks in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries[3]

For figures such as Sayyid Qutb, who spoke of 'international crusaderism', the Crusades never ended; the struggle between Christianity and Islam is ongoing. Others interpret the Crusades as the first acts of Western

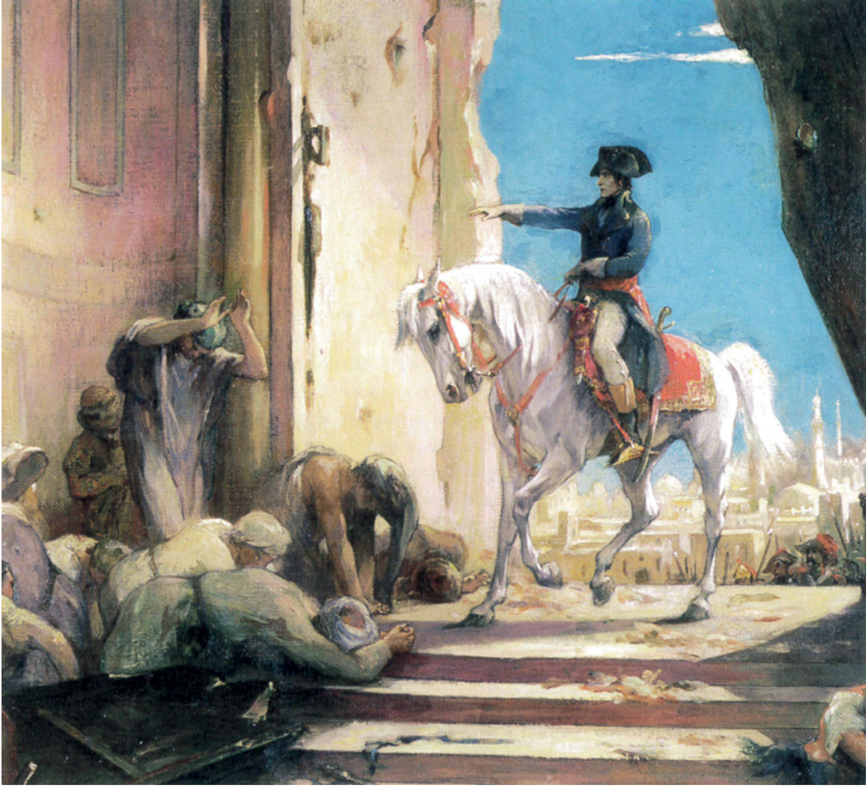

Figure 9.5 *Napoleon Bonaparte in the Grand Mosque at Cairo*, by Henri Lévy (1841–1904)

imperialism (called in Arabic 'premature imperialism'), and it is a sober fact that most traditionally Muslim countries have at one time been colonised by Europeans. The rhetoric of such political discourse is strongly anti-imperialist, anti-Western, and anti-Christian, its imagery evoking stereotypes from the Crusading period. Christian westerners have 'polluted' Islamic territory and its most sacred places. Mehmet Ali Agca, the Turk who attempt to kill the Pope in 1981, wrote in a letter: 'I have decided to kill Pope John Paul II, supreme commander of the Crusades.'

Just as in Saladin's day, the recapture of Jerusalem, the third holiest city in Islam, is still the principal aim of certain Arab and Muslim activists. And all Palestinians yearn to have access to the Muslim religious places in the Holy City.

Figure 9.6 A monumental statue of Saladin, standing majestically in front of the medieval citadel of Damascus

Some Muslims draw analogies between the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem and the state of Israel. The fact that one was Christian and the other is Jewish does not, in their view, undermine the basic truth of infidel violation of Muslim space. Groups such as Hamas (Movements of Islamic Resistance) and Hizballah (Party of God) were set up under a religious banner to fight for the liberation of Palestine and against Western 'crusader' intervention and support for Israel.

The vast majority of Muslims do not share such extreme views, but it is undeniable that for many Muslims Jerusalem is as focal today as it was after 1099, when the Holy City fell to the Franks, who occupied it until Saladin retook it in 1187. As in 1099, the loss of Jerusalem in the Six Day War of 1967 was a terrible blow to the Muslim world. The poignancy of the loss was made more acute that same year by an arson attack on the Aqsa mosque by an Australian Christian zealot. The attack destroyed the beautiful pulpit commissioned by Nur al-Din and placed in the mosque by Saladin in 1187.

The founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini, was fully behind the Muslim, anti-Zionist struggle to liberate Jerusalem. In

Figure 9.7a Iraqi stamp (1988) bearing the image of Saladin and President Saddam Husayn, the self-styled 'Second Saladin'

Figure 9.7b Saudi Arabian stamp (1987) issued to mark the 800th anniversary of Saladin's victory at the Battle of Hattin in 1187

the Iran–Iraq war of the 1980s, Iranian soldiers were issued maps of their route via Iraq to Jerusalem. Khomeini made the last Friday of Ramadan into 'Jerusalem Day' and a famous Iranian stamp of 1980 commemorating 'Universal Jerusalem Day' bears the words 'Let us liberate Jerusalem' in Arabic, Persian and English. Jerusalem Day is now marked throughout the Muslim world by stamps that also depict the Dome of the Rock or Saladin on horseback, returning to recapture Jerusalem.

The obsession with the Crusades for some Muslim thinkers is a modern phenomenon, as is the Muslim 'rediscovery' of Saladin. Although, ironically, this was largely due to his iconic status in Western Europe, Saladin's historic role as a key figure in the struggle against the Franks has been eagerly seized upon by modern Arab and Islamic thinkers. Arab political leaders, such as Nasser and Sadat in Egypt and Saddam Husayn in Iraq, aspired to become the 'Second Saladin'.[4] Despite Saladin's Kurdish origins, his mantle has been donned by Arab and wider Islamic militant groups eager to fight the 'Crusaders', the *salibiyyun* (cross bearers) – the West and specifically the United States. To some, Saladin embodies the heroic spirit of the Arab nation; others espouse the Islamist viewpoint, that he unites the Middle East under the banner of Islam.

A Clash of Civilisations?

The historian Bernard Lewis was the first to coin the phrase 'clash of civilisations' when he wrote in 1990 of 'the perhaps irrational but surely historic reaction of an ancient rival [Islam] against our Judeo-Christian heritage, our secular present, and the worldwide expansion of both'. Lewis's idea was elaborated by Samuel Huntington, and although Huntington has modified his views since 11 September 2001, his hypothesis remains very influential because of the polarisation he sees between the West and the Islamic world.

Huntington speaks of a new era of world politics in which countries group themselves according to 'civilisation'. As the world becomes a smaller place, with increased immigration and interactions among peoples, their consciousness of the deep-rooted civilisation to which they belong intensifies. The revival of religion (and here he singles out Islam) provides an identity above national boundaries. Nowadays, with the West at the peak of its

power, other civilisations turn inwards, but are faced with America's global influence on lifestyle and material goods. Huntington identifies global fault lines, flashpoints for crisis and bloodshed (such as the Balkans), and highlights the ancient 'bloody borders' between Islam and the West, where their troubled interaction could become more virulent: 'The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.'

For many, Huntington's paradigm is too adversarial and simplistic. In 2001 the Palestinian commentator Edward W. Said (1935–2003) accused Lewis and Huntington of conjuring up 'a cartoonlike world where Popeye and Bluto bash each other mercilessly', ignoring 'the internal dynamics and plurality of every civilization'. Like other world faiths, Islam is not monolithic, and it is by no means a given that a Persian-speaking Iranian Shi'ite will make common cause with an Arabic-speaking Saudi Sunni, though both rightly call themselves Muslims. Nor will an Indonesian, Turkish or Balkan Muslim necessarily feel a great affinity with either. And where do Arab Christians fit into Huntington's model? They feel allegiance at once to their Arabness, their nation state and their faith.

The prominence given to the speeches of Osama bin Laden in the world's media since the 11 September outrage does not help the majority of Muslims

Figure 9.8 Ruins of Mostar in Bosnia–Herzegovina during the civil war in the largely Muslim former Yugoslav republic, 1993

who stress that Islam and terrorism are incompatible and condemn the Western demonisation of Islam. Nor does Usama's uncomprisingly hostile message against 'global crusaders' (the United States and its allies) help to allay Western fears.

What of the Western 'side' of the 'clash'? In the wake of 11 September, President George W. Bush declared: 'This crusade, this war on terrorism, is going to take a while.' His aides rapidly denied that he had used the term literally, but it still provoked a storm in the Muslim world. It is doubtful whether the West's leaders or its media are conscious that the historic root of 'crusade' is the Latin *crux* (cross). But this root is not lost in Arabic, which has no single word for 'crusade', and translates it, for example, as *harb al-salib*

Figure 9.9 The Syrian Grand Mufti welcomes Pope John Paul II in the Damascus Umayyad Mosque, May 2001

(war of the cross), *harb salibiyya* (cross war) or *hamla salibiyya* (cross attack). It is hardly surprising that Muslims are sensitive to the term.

Certainly, to some Muslim propagandists at least, the rhetoric of conflict is expressed in religious terms, as being against 'Christians' and 'crusaders', even if it is in reality against American globalisation and secularisation. At the same time, 'crusader' can simply be used in the Muslim world as a pejorative word for a western European.[5]

But more importantly, both sides in the propaganda war bandy the terms crusade and jihad very loosely and invoke history in a cavalierly simplistic manner. Those who speak of 'crusade' conveniently forget the Fourth Crusade (and others) where Christian fought Christian, not to mention times when Muslims allied with Crusaders against other Muslims. And those who trumpet Saladin's conquest of Jerusalem conveniently forget that his descendants handed back the Holy City to the Franks thirty-nine years later.

Notes

1. The French writer François-René de Chateaubriand (1768–1848) visited the Holy Land in 1806 and was made a papal knight of the Holy Sepulchre, vowing to recover it from the 'infidel'. His *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem et de Jérusalem à Paris* (1811) describes the Crusades as a confrontation between Islam and 'civilisation': 'The Crusades were not only about the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre, but more about knowing which would win on earth: a religion [Islam] that was the enemy of civilisation, systematically favourable to ignorance, to despotism, to slavery; or a religion that had caused to reawaken in modern people the genius of a sage antiquity, and had abolished base servitude.'
2. The Crusades inspired some American art, such as *The March of the Crusaders* by George Innes (1825–94), but otherwise the romantic idealisation of Crusading did not make great headway in the United States, which tended to shy away from anything that glorified the Old World. The Crusades were also deeply linked with Catholicism, which was widely criticised at the time as un-American, and there was a wide antipathy towards such ideas as nobility, feudalism and wars of religion.

   The novelist Mark Twain visited Europe and the Holy Land in 1867 and describes his travels in *The Innocents Abroad* (1869), his most popular work in his lifetime. With quiet irony and a scepticism typical of contemporary Americans

he describes the purported sacred relics displayed by the Catholic monks in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. Most impressive of all the church's 'relics', however, is the sword of Godfrey of Bouillon: 'No blade in Christendom wields such enchantment as this – no blade of all that rust in the ancestral halls of Europe is able to invoke such visions of romance in the brain of him who looks upon it – none that can prate of such chivalric deeds or tell such brave tales of the warrior days of old . . . It speaks to him of Baldwin, and Tancred, the princely Saladin, and great Richard of the Lion Heart. It was with just such blades as these that these splendid heroes of romance used to segregate a man, so to speak, and leave the half of him to fall one way and the other half the other.'

3 The year after the Suez crisis of 1956, when an attempt by British, French and Israeli forces to seize the Suez Canal was successfully rebuffed, the Egyptian historian Muhammad Kamal Husayn declared: 'The struggle conducted today by the leaders of the Arab liberation movement is the same as that conducted in the past by the Ayyubids and Mamluks to oust the Crusaders. And, as the Arabs were victorious in the past, they will be in the present.'

In such statements it matters little that the Ayyubids (including Saladin) were Kurds or that the Mamluks were Turks. The rhetoric allows modern Arabs to claim these victories as their own. In Arab nationalist discourse, Islam is not necessarily in the foreground; Crusading metaphors are flexible enough to fit secular contexts and nationalist ideals.

4. The self-styled jihad fighter Saddam Husayn modelled himself on Saladin, exploiting the fact that they both came from Tikrit – Saddam even tweaked his birth date to coincide with Saladin's. In July 1987, the 800th anniversary of Saladin's great victory over the Crusaders at Hattin, a celebratory conference entitled 'The Battle of Liberation: from Saladin to Saddam Husayn' was held in Tikrit. The same year a children's book called *Saladin the Hero* was published, with a picture of Saddam on its cover. Its pages recorded the 'heroic' deeds of Saddam, the 'Second Saladin'. The irony of such manipulation of the truth was not lost on Saddam's critics: he massacred thousands of Saladin's Kurdish countrymen and was not, unlike Saladin, renowned for his clemency. Perhaps most glaringly, Saddam's military exploits ended in failure.

5. The Palestinian writer Mahmud Darwish (born 1941) writes movingly of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 in his book *Memory for Forgetfulness*. The work is infused with the memory of the Crusades and shifts effortlessly between bombed Beirut and the Crusader occupation of the Holy Land. The word 'Frank' in Arabic primarily means 'western European', but is also popularly used to mean

'foreigner' in general. Darwish sees the term as an extended metaphor for the foreign invaders who have occupied Arab lands. Despite his melancholy reflections about the Lebanon and the Levant, he remains optimistic about the future of the region.

10

The Evolution of the Saladin Legend in the West

Introductory Comments[1]

The evolution of the Saladin legend in Europe is a rare and extraordinary example of the adoption of a medieval Muslim warrior as a European hero. This instance of cultural transfer is all the more noteworthy since Saladin was perhaps the major opponent of western Christendom at the time of the Crusades.

Three major themes will be analysed here: first, Saladin in the mirror of the Western sources contemporary with him; secondly, the evolution of the Saladin legend in Europe; and lastly, the question of why it was Saladin rather than some other Muslim leader of the Crusading period who attracted such remarkable posthumous fame in Western Europe.

Saladin as Seen in the Mirror of his Crusader Contemporaries

Our knowledge of the Crusaders' views of Saladin during his own lifetime is based principally on the detailed history written by Archbishop William of Tyre, who was Chancellor of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem from 1170 to 84. William's testimony is invaluable for a true assessment of the achievements of Saladin. William's intellectual calibre was very impressive. He was high in the councils of the Franks and could therefore speak with authority and insight of the attitudes and beliefs of the nobility of Outremer. Born in the Near East, he had taken the trouble to learn Arabic as well as Latin, Greek and French. He was an active participant in political events and especially for the period of Saladin's career, until 1184, his great history *Historia Rerum in*

Partibus Gestarum, written in Latin, remains a remarkable source for these crucial years. It is doubly regrettable that for personal reasons William should have left Jerusalem and that he died two years before the battle of Hattin. Yet that circumstance makes his assessment of Saladin uncannily prophetic.

Commenting on Saladin's accession to power in Egypt after the death of Shirkuh in 1169, William of Tyre describes Saladin as

> a man of sharp mind, active in war, and generous beyond proper measure.[2]

However, William's picture of Saladin is not devoid of criticisms and possible inaccuracies. He reports, for example, that Saladin personally killed the caliph and his sons before seizing the riches of the treasury and corrupting his soldiery with gold.[3] Later on, after the death of Nur al-Din, William reproaches Saladin for ingratitude towards his former master:

> Saladin, disdaining the laws of humanity, unmindful of his (humble) condition, and ungrateful for the benefits that had been bestowed on him by the father of the boy, had thus risen up against his lord, who had not yet reached puberty.[4]

These blatant criticisms of Saladin by William do not, however, detract from his fundamental respect, admiration and fear of him. At no point does William underestimate the enemy or the danger which Saladin's growing power presents to the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Indeed, he is fully aware of Saladin's ambition and qualities of leadership:

> It pleased all those present . . . that every effort should be made to resist this so magnificent man rushing through victory after victory to the very top.[5]

William of Tyre's account of the history of the Crusades stops suddenly in 1184. As he lays down his pen he is in despair at the inevitable outcome which he foresees for the struggle with Saladin. It was fortunate for him that he did not live to see the triumph of Saladin at Hattin and Jerusalem. William's judgement of Saladin, therefore, is one of fear and admiration but he is also able to criticise his faults, especially his ruthless ambition.

For the Crusader view of the two crowning moments of Saladin's career, the victory at Hattin and the conquest of Jerusalem in 1187, we are dependent on the inferior accounts of the continuators of William of Tyre. One of

them, Ernoul, the squire of Balian of Ibelin, is able to present a favourable picture of Saladin, even in the bitter hour of defeat following the loss of Jerusalem.[6] Ernoul praises Saladin's behaviour in Jerusalem after the conquest, pointing out his pity and kindness towards its defeated Christian inhabitants. Speaking of Saladin's magnanimity to the wives and daughters of knights in Jerusalem, Ernoul writes that he gave them so much that they praised God for it and broadcast to the world the kindness and honour which Saladin had done to them.[7] Later, in 1192, after the truce with Richard, Saladin is shown in this same source as having pity towards Crusader lords.[8] Such comments are all the more remarkable since they occur in enemy sources written in the wake of the Crusaders' most important loss, politically and emotionally.

A view of Saladin has been presented which may be gleaned from Crusader writers with personal experience of combat and life in the Near East in the twelfth century. Even in his own lifetime, when he was the Crusaders' principal foe, such sources are forced to a reluctant admiration of his personality and achievements. It could be argued that such writers may have wished to soften the bitterness of defeat, by presenting the conqueror in an exaggeratedly favourable light, and this point will be discussed again later in this article. But the details which bear on Saladin's personal chivalry, his pity and his kindness do not fit into this theory. There would seem to be no motive for praising Saladin in this way other than the desire to present a true account of what happened. Their glowing testimonial corroborates the panegyrics of the Arabic biographers of Saladin.

The Development of the Saladin Legend in Western Europe

It was not long before Saladin's reputation entered European romance and legend. Between the writing of the exact contemporary of Saladin, William of Tyre, who greatly fears this 'potentissimus princeps' and highlights his pride and presumption, and the work of the anonymous author of the Old French version of William's *Historia*, the *Estoire d'Eracles*, written in the early decades of the thirteenth century, Saladin's image had already changed. Within a single generation, therefore, Saladin is depicted in an unequivocally positive light as a magnanimous and noble leader, a pivotal figure, a paradigm of Christian chivalry.[9]

In the thirteenth-century Old French source, *Estoires d'Outremer et de la naissance Salehadin*, Saladin has become the subject of heroic legend.[10] The work's anonymous author calls Saladin the 'chivalrous Turk Salehadin who was so valiant and wise'.[11] In an extended anecdote, *La fille du comte de* Pontieu,[12] Saladin is shown as a descendant of the French noble family of Pontieu. Several episodes deal with Saladin's war with the queen of Turkey and her allies, King Elxelin of Nubia and the caliph of Baghdad.[13] This source also relates in a section entitled *Ordre de chevalerie*[14] how Saladin asks his prisoner Hugh of Tiberias to teach him how to become a Christian knight.[15]

What was to prove a tenacious legendary motif concerning Saladin – the story of the three religions, symbolised by the three rings – is already found in embryonic form in the *Estoires*. According to the story, on his deathbed Saladin asks representatives of the three monotheistic faiths to hold a debate on the matter of which of these is the best:

> When Saladin died, he sent for the caliph of Baghdad and the patriarch of Jerusalem and the wisest Jews one could find in the whole Jerusalem area, for he wished to find out which law was the best.[16]

After the discussion is over, Saladin does not know which religion to choose and so he divides up his realm into three parts, giving the best to the Christians, the second to the Saracens and the third to the Jews.[17]

A similar picture of Saladin as a chivalrous hero appears in many medieval French romances. A typical example is the thirteenth-century work entitled *Récits d'un Ménéstral de Reims*[18] which links Saladin with Eleanor of Aquitaine, the wife of Louis le Jeune of France. This famous French queen languished in Tyre in the winter of 1148–9. In her melancholy she thought longingly of Saladin whose exploits had much impressed her. Historical accuracy does not matter here, although it should be remembered that Saladin was only a child at this time.

Not much is known about the author of the early thirteenth century poem entitled the *Ordène de Chevalerie*.[19] The image of Saladin in this work is very favourable:

> A king who was at that time of great lordship in pagan land and was a most loyal Saracen.[20]

The poem speaks of the initiating of Saladin into the rites of knighthood by one Hues de Tabarie who was taken prisoner by Saladin near Beaufort and then released.[21] Long before Boccaccio's attributing to Saladin the ability to speak the Lombard tongue,[22] the *Ordène de Chevalerie* tells us that Saladin addresses Hues in Latin which he 'knew very well'.[23]

So, it is clear that within only a generation or two, Saladin was to enjoy a widespread reputation in the medieval West as a man of great courage and courtesy. Some sources were happy just to laud his virtues, whilst others went so far as to suggest that he embraced the Christian faith.[24]

Saladin and Dante (d. 1321)

Dante's treatment of Saladin added greatly to his prestige in medieval Europe. It is interesting to note that Dante places Saladin in the Inferno, but in the first circle, amongst the virtuous heathen and blameless heroes of classical antiquity.[25] Although set apart, Saladin is positioned not far from such figures as Socrates, Plato, Euclid and Galen. Saladin also enjoys proximity with two great Islamic philosophers, Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd. By isolating Saladin a little, Dante would seem to be singling him out for special attention and approbation:

> And by himself apart, I saw the Saladin.[26]

Dante is inspired by seeing such personages whom he describes as

> the great spirits by the sight of whom I swell in myself with pride.[27]

The inclusion of Saladin in this august company testifies to his already solidly virtuous reputation in fourteenth-century Europe, despite the widespread anti-Muslim prejudices held by medieval Christians. However, by placing him alone, Dante is emphasising that Saladin is an exception. And of course, Dante's vehemently hostile representation of the Prophet, who is placed in the depths of the Inferno amongst the ranks of those who have created schism, is well known.[28]

Saladin and Boccaccio (d. 1375)

Saladin is also accorded importance in the *Decameron* where Boccaccio includes two anecdotes about him. The first story (Day 1, Story 3) tells an

elaborated version of the story of the three rings. Its principal hero is the Jew, Melchisedech, from Alexandria, from whom Saladin, as usual profligate with his finances, needs to borrow money in an emergency. In the same vein as William of Tyre, Boccaccio praises Saladin:

> whose valour was such that he had not only from humble origin made himself sultan of Egypt but he had also gained many victories over Saracen and Christian kings.[29]

As in the *Estoires d'Outremer*, Saladin says to Melchisedech:

> For this reason I would gladly like to know from you which of the three laws you think is the true one, either the Jewish or the Saracen or the Christian?

After Melchisedech has given his astute and judicious reply, Saladin gives him most munificent gifts, 'kept him always as his friend and maintained him in a great and honourable position near him'.[30]

In the second story (Day 10, Story 9), Boccaccio, delving into the rich store of medieval folklore about Crusader heroes, tells how 'that most valiant prince, Saladin'[31] with his lords and servants travels through Lombardy disguised as a Cypriot merchant. He meets a man called Torello who gives him lavish hospitality over several days. Conversation is no problem since 'Saladin and his lords all know Latin'.[32] They are presented as gentlemen of high breeding: indeed, Torello exclaims:

> Would that it pleased God that our country produced gentlemen such as are the merchants that I see Cyprus makes.[33]

Later Torello goes to the Holy Land to fight in the Crusade, is taken prisoner and brought to Alexandria. Saladin makes him his falconer[34] and eventually recognises him. He makes himself known to Torello and treats him with the utmost honour.[35] Finally Torello is whisked back to Lombardy where he acknowledges Saladin as his friend and vassal. Thus Boccaccio's portrayal of Saladin builds on his already established reputation as a hero of chivalry and a model of religious tolerance.

Saladin and Lessing (d. 1781)

Lessing, a key figure in the German Enlightenment, chose Saladin to represent Islam in his play *Nathan der Weise*, completed in 1779. Imbued with the spirit of the age – with scepticism and religious tolerance – the play shows that all perceptions of truth are relative. Some aspects of Saladin's personality as portrayed by Lessing reveal an 'Orientalist' portrayal of the 'Other'; he is shown as hasty, autocratic and brutal, governing by whim and arbitrary will. Yet, Lessing is at pains to describe Saladin in a sympathetic light as the play progresses.[36] The play is given an oriental setting, enabling Lessing to carry out with impunity a scathing critique of established religion in Europe. His choice of Jerusalem as the site of his play is, however, especially felicitous, since the Holy City is sacred to all three Abrahamic monotheistic religions under scrutiny in the play. Placing the action in the east, in Jerusalem, thus endows the play with a message of universal validity.

Why choose Saladin to represent the quintessential Muslim? No doubt Lessing knew the rich legendary tradition which had grown up in Europe. The concentration on a Muslim hero, moreover, from the Crusading period enabled him to arouse memories of a bloody inter-religious conflict and to convey the message that such a conflict should never recur. It is Saladin, not the Templar, the main representative of Christianity, who is open-minded enough to ask of Nathan, the Jew, the key question of the play:

> Which faith, which law has illuminated you most?[37]

Saladin is then used as the mouthpiece for the pre-Enlightenment position which asserts that only one of the three monotheistic religions can be right, although his desire to know the answer to his question is shown as a sudden fancy on his part:

> It can well be that I am the first sultan, who has such a whim.[38]

The story of the three rings, already used by Boccaccio and others before him, is under Lessing's pen, a didactic vehicle for Nathan the Jew to preach religious tolerance. Saladin is warm-hearted and sensitive enough to embrace

Nathan's message; indeed, in unusually long and explicit stage instructions Lessing writes that 'Saladin rushes up to Nathan and takes his hand, which he does not release until the end of the story'.[39]

Nathan speaks well of Saladin even before he meets him, stressing that public opinion thinks highly of him.[40] The Templar praises Saladin's magnanimity in saving his life, as he declares:

> The life I live is his gift.[41]

It is, of course, the dramatist's prerogative to distort history, or even legend and here Lessing is certainly allowing himself such liberties. Indeed, Saladin's fabled generosity and mercy towards the defeated in battle did not extend towards the Templars whom he cordially hated and to whom he allowed no quarter after the battle of Hattin.[42] It is perhaps possible that Lessing's Templar is some echo of the story of the famous Templar who did escape execution after Hattin, the Grand Master of the Temple himself, Gérard of Ridefort.[43]

What does Lessing know of the 'historical' Saladin? Two small details show some attempt on his part to evoke the context of Saladin's court. He and his sister Sittah (the Arabic word for 'lady') play chess together,[44] and the suggestion that Saladin needs to borrow money from Nathan is perhaps an echo of Saladin's well-known empty treasury.[45]

Saladin and Sir Walter Scott (d. 1832)

The Crusading phenomenon proved to be a rich source of inspiration for the literary and artistic imagination of nineteenth-century Europe. Like other famous writers of the nineteenth century, such as Disraeli and Twain,[46] Sir Walter Scott was fascinated by the Crusades, a phenomenon which he used in four of his novels,[47] as a backcloth for exotic tales and as a manifestation of chivalric ideals.

Scott had no first-hand knowledge of the Muslim world, but this did not deter him from writing about the exploits of the Crusaders in the Middle East. He read widely in medieval primary sources on the Crusades but he himself admits that what knowledge he does possess is second-hand. As he confesses in the preface to *The Talisman* (dated 1 July 1832 – only two months before he died):

> I felt the difficulty of giving a vivid picture of a part of the world with which I was almost totally unacquainted, unless by early recollections of the Arabian Nights Entertainments.[48]

Scott continues disarmingly with the remark that he laboured:

> under the incapacity of ignorance, in which, as far as regards Eastern manners, I was as thickly wrapped as an Egyptian in his fog.[49]

In the absence of first-hand experience, Scott uses in his evocation of Saladin a blend of Orientalist fantasy and chivalric legend. An essential element of Scott's depiction of Saladin is the contrast he draws between him and Richard the Lionheart. Richard's warlike character, 'wild and generous, a pattern of chivalry, with all its extravagant virtues and its no less absurd errors',[50] is set against that of Saladin, to the latter's advantage. Yet, this contrast, favourable to Saladin, is couched in Eurocentric superiority and condescension towards the East; indeed, Richard, 'the Christian and English monarch showed all the cruelty of an *Eastern* (my italics) sultan, and Saladin, on the other hand, displayed the deep policy and prudence of a *European* (my italics) sovereign'.[51] Scott sees this 'singular contrast'[52] between the two rulers as a useful literary device for his novel. They will, moreover, vie with each other to excel 'in the knightly qualities of bravery and generosity'.[53]

Within the body of the novel itself, Scott follows medieval Western tradition in attributing to Saladin the qualities of 'a generous and valiant enemy',[54] a sultan 'who is true-hearted and loyal, so far as a blinded infidel may be called so'.[55] Saladin is, in the view of Richard, the epitome of European chivalric values:

> It were well . . . to apply to the generosity of the royal Saladin, since, heathen as he is, I have never known knight more fulfilled of nobleness, or to whose good faith we may so peremptorily intrust ourselves.[56]

The Talisman has other echoes of the repertoire of themes associated with the European 'legend' of Saladin, including Richard's wish to convert Saladin to Christianity,[57] and the alleged plan to marry Saladin to a relation of Richard's, a royal Plantagenet lady called Edith.[58] As usual, Saladin is portrayed as lavish in his bounty:

> The right hand of the soldan grasps the treasures of the East, and it is the fountain of generosity.[59]

Scott's idealised portrait of Saladin reaches its height of romanticism in his meeting with Richard, a meeting held with the grandest pomp and ceremony: indeed, Saladin's appearance foreshadows Rudolph Valentino's 'shaykh of Araby':

> The soldan wore a sort of veil attached to his turban, which partly obscured the view of his noble features. He rode a milk-white Arabian, which bore him as if conscious and proud of his noble burden.[60]

Both rulers 'embraced as brethren and equals'.[61] However, Scott cannot resist further contrast between them. When Richard's powerful two-handed sword, 'in pure trial of strength', slices a bar of iron into two pieces, Saladin takes his scimitar, 'a curved and narrow blade', and with extraordinary delicacy severs a silk cushion in two.[62]

Perhaps surprisingly, however, in view of the flights of fancy displayed in Scott's extended description of the meeting between Richard and Saladin, there is a solid historical foundation to Saladin's words on the last page of the novel, where, echoing the sentiments of an Arabic source, contemporary with Saladin, the sultan is made to exclaim:

> I may not yield up that Jerusalem which you so much desire to hold. It is to us, as to you, a Holy City.[63]

In sum, therefore, Scott, a child of his time, has seized the Romantic elements in the Saladin legend. Saladin, the epitome of chivalry, has gripped Scott's heart and imagination. Like other contemporaries of his, Scott, in distant Scotland, appreciates that the Crusades were not as noble a venture as some would believe and he salutes Saladin and the Islamic culture his hero represents.[64]

Saladin in Twentieth-century Orientalist Scholarship

Much more recently than Sir Walter Scott, a spate of biographies of Saladin appeared, written by enthusiasts such as Rosebault and Western Orientalists such as Lane-Poole and Gibb. Writers such as these kept the glowing image

of Saladin intact and untarnished. Rosebault calls Saladin 'an unswerving champion of the loftiest principles of chivalry'[65] and 'a cavalier at all times, as perfect in manner as in performance; magnificently generous and superbly courteous, as though he had indeed been born to the purple'.[66] Lane-Poole speaks of Saladin as 'that familiar and amiable companion which is called a household word'.[67] Jackson and Lyons, on the other hand, have a more measured approach; they 'demythologise' Saladin to some extent, but they do not damage the essential outlines of his career, the traits of his character and the extent of his achievements.[68] A dissenting voice has been that of Ehrenkreutz who in 1972 wrote a controversial biography of Saladin and attempted in it to topple Saladin from his pedestal.[69] Ehrenkreutz argues that Saladin's reputation is founded on his liberation of Jerusalem and that without this he could boast no outstanding achievements. Even Saladin's great victory at Hattin, Ehrenkreutz argues, profited from fundamental tactical mistakes on the part of the Crusaders rather than positive planning by Saladin himself. In his summing up of Saladin, Ehrenkreutz suggests that because of the panegyrics of Saladin's contemporary biographers, 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani and Ibn Shaddad, 'Saladin's posthumous reputation rose to the level of legendary grandeur and sanctified irreproachability'.[70]

Why Saladin?

But there remains one problem. It may be summarised succinctly in the words 'why Saladin?' Why was it not other Muslim commanders who fought the Crusaders – notably, Zengi, Nur al-Din or Baybars – who attracted the panegyrics of posterity? Zengi can be ruled out at once since his operations were clearly within the sphere of power politics only and his personality even in the Muslim sources emerges as unattractive. But his son, Nur al-Din, was a different matter altogether. He was the object of much admiration and respect in his lifetime on the part of Muslims and Christians alike; indeed, he is described by William of Tyre as a 'just prince, subtle and prudent and, according to the traditions of his race, religious'.[71] Nur al-Din was indeed a worthy predecessor to Saladin, so why is it that Saladin became the most honoured of all Muslim leaders in Western eyes? It is clear that Saladin had good friends amongst the Crusader knights, such as Balian, and that he was much respected by Richard the Lionheart and Raymond of Tripoli. His generosity

in victory after Hattin and thereafter Jerusalem is recorded with approbation in the Crusader sources and generally there was obviously truth in the later legendary picture of him which presented him as civilised, honourable and kind. But that still does not explain why Saladin has become the best-known Muslim in the West, with the exception of the Prophet Muhammad himself. In the final analysis, it is probably because it was Saladin who captured Jerusalem that he has become the stuff of legend. The Christians had longed to regain control of that most holy city for some five centuries. Now, after they had wrested it from the Muslims by dint of superhuman effort, and had managed to hang on to it for a tantalisingly brief period, it had fallen to the Muslims again. The fall of Jerusalem must have been well-nigh unbearable for the Christians, both in the Levant and back home in the West. It was a natural defence mechanism to assert that the man who had beaten them was of no ordinary mettle. Believing that they had lost to an exceptional, almost superhuman opponent may well have been a means of coping with the ignominy of defeat. Such a procedure is not unfamiliar to the psychiatrist. Whatever the reasons for Saladin's fame it is true to say that no other Muslim ever caught the imagination of Europe as Saladin did. His superiority over his contemporaries, both Muslim and Christian, was acknowledged in his own lifetime by his enemies, the Crusaders; his image, even amidst the bigotry of the European Middle Ages, remained unsullied, even romanticised, and that at a time when Europe's attitude towards Islam was a sorry mixture of ignorance and hostility.

Concluding Comments

Europe's fascination with Saladin is deep-rooted. It began soon after his death in 1193 and has continued ever since. Indeed, the evolution of the Saladin 'legend' occurred in the West, not in the Middle East; the portrayal of him by Lessing as an Enlightenment figure in his play *Nathan der Weise* and by Sir Walter Scott in *The Talisman* are but two crowning moments in a long tradition of the romance of Saladin.

By a curious irony, the Muslim Middle East discovered or rediscovered Saladin only rather late, in the nineteenth century. By a circuitous route Muslims learned of this great hero of the nineteenth century at the dawn of the colonial period when Christian Arabs translated European writings on the

Crusades and told their Muslim fellow-Arabs about the exploits of Saladin. The Muslim world then embraced him and has subsequently re-created him in the image of the charismatic leader who will unite the Middle East against the forces of external aggression. Many modern Arab heads of state aspire to be the second Saladin.

Notes

1. The translations given in the main text are my own.
2. William of Tyre, *Historia Rerum in Partibus Transmarinis Gestarum*, ed. A. Beugnot and A. Langlois, 2 vols (Paris, 1844), 958.
3. Ibid., 958–9.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., 1016.
6. L. De Mas Latrie (ed.), *Chronique d'Ernoul et de Bernard le Trésorier* (Paris, 1871).
7. De Mas Latrie, *Chronique d'Ernoul et de Bernard le Trésorier*, 230.
8. Ibid., 293.
9. J. Phillips, *The Crusades, 1095–1197* (Harlow, London and New York, 2002), 150.
10. M. A. Jubb (ed.), *A Critical Edition of the 'Estoires d'Outremer et de la naissance Salehadin'* (London, 1990).
11. Jubb, *A Critical Edition of the 'Estoires d'Outremer'*, 88–9: 'Courtois Turc Salehadin, ki tant fu preus et sages'.
12. Ibid., 59–89.
13. Ibid., 137–40, 148–52, 157–62, 172–4.
14. Ibid., 109–14.
15. Ibid., 110: 'Vous m'ensaigniés comment on fait chevalier a la loi crestienne et ke vous le me mostrés'.
16. Ibid., 235.
17. Ibid.
18. N. De Wailly (ed.), *Chronique de Rains. Récits d'un ménestrel de Reims au treizième siècle* (Paris, 1876). This work is discussed by S. Lane-Poole, *Saladin and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (New York and London, 1898), 380–2.
19. Busby, the editor of the work, argues that the author may have been a cleric and dates it to around 1220; cf. K. Busby (ed.) (tr.), *Raoul de Hodenc, Le Roman des Eles. The Anonymous Ordène de Chevalerie* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 1983), 86–7.

20. Busby, *Raoul de Hodenc, Le Roman des Eles*, 105: '(D)'un roi qu'en terre paienie, Fu jadis de grant seignorie, Et fu molt loiaus Sarrasins', and 170.
21. For a discussion of the possible identity of the author, cf. ibid., 86.
22. Cf. p. xx of this article.
23. Busby, *Raoul de Hodenc, Le Roman des Eles*, 106, 'Il le salue en son latin, Quar il le connoissoit molt bien'.
24. For a full discussion of this, cf. G. Paris, 'La légende de Saladin', *Journal des Savants* (May 1893), 284–99, especially 289.
25. Asìn Palacios is negative in his view of Dante's positioning of Saladin so high in the Inferno: 'Neither the military qualities nor the magnanimity of Saladin can be regarded as natural virtues in themselves to warrant the exemption from eternal punishment of one who did such grievous harm to the faith of Christ'; M. Asìn Palacios, *Islam and the Divine Comedy*, tr. H. Shuterland (London, 1968), 262.
26. 'E solo in parte vidi'l Saladino', Dante, *La Divina Commedia*, annotated by L. Malagoli, 3 vols (Milan [1961–2]), vol. 1: *Inferno*, canto 4, 54.
27. 'li spiriti magni, che del vedere in me stesso n'essalto', ibid., 53.
28. Ibid., canto 28, 355–6.
29. G. Boccaccio, *Decameron*, ed. M. Marti, 2 vols (Milan, [1974]), 44–7.
30. Ibid., 47: 'e sempre per suo amico l'ebbe ed in grande ed onorevole stato appresso di sé il mantenne'.
31. Ibid., 707.
32. Ibid., 709.
33. Ibid.
34. G. Boccaccio G., *Decameron*, 713.
35. Ibid., 714.
36. G. E. Lessing, *Nathan der Weise*, ed. D. Hill (Hull, 1988).
37. Ibid., 117–8: 'Was für ein Glaube, was für ein Gesetz hat dir am meisten eingeleuchtet?'
38. Lessing, *Nathan der Weise*, 118: 'Kann wohl sein, dass ich der erste Sultan bin, der eine solche Grille hat'.
39. Ibid., 124.
40. Ibid., 99.
41. Ibid.
42. For the evidence of the Muslim sources, see C. Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (Edinburgh, 1999), 421, nn. 23–6.
43. According to Barber, it is not known why he was 'the only Templar spared after

Hattin'. Barber goes on to say that presumably Saladin had seen his value as a bargaining counter; M. Barber, *The New Knighthood: A History of the Order of the Temple* (Cambridge, 1994), 116.

44. Lessing, *Nathan der Weise*, 79.
45. Ibid., 89: 'It was only possible to provide items for his funeral, items that cost a pittance, by borrowing money.' See Ibn Shaddad Baha'u al-Din Abu al-Mahasin, *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin* or *Al-nawadir al-sultaniyya wa qa-mahasin al-Yusufiyya*, tr. D. S. Richards (Burlington, 2001), 244.
46. Disraeli wrote *Tancred: The New Crusader* in 1847 and Twain visited the battlefield of Hattin and wrote *The Innocents Abroad* in 1869.
47. *Ivanhoe* (1819), *The Talisman* and *The Betrothed* (1825) and *Count Robert of Paris* (1831); for an extended discussion of Scott and the Crusades, cf. E. Siberry, *The New Crusaders: Images of the Crusades in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries* (Aldershot, 2000), 112–30.
48. W. Scott, *The Talisman* (London and Glasgow, n.d.), 3.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid., 4.
51. Ibid., 4–5.
52. Ibid., 5.
53. Scott, *The Talisman*.
54. Ibid., 115.
55. Ibid., 117.
56. Ibid., 378.
57. Ibid., 131.
58. Ibid., 228–9; 450–1.
59. Ibid., 231.
60. Ibid., 419.
61. Ibid.
62. Ibid., 422–4.
63. Ibid., 461.
64. Siberry quotes the views of Edward Daniel Clarke, who admires Muslims: 'A due attention to history may show that the Saracens, as they were called, were in fact more enlightened than their invaders'. See E. D. Clarke, *Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia and Africa* (London, 1812), cited in E. Siberry, 'Images of the Crusades in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries', in J. Riley-Smith (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades* (Oxford, 1995), 366.
65. C. J. Rosebault, *Saladin Prince of Chivalry* (London, 1930), xiii.

66. Ibid., xi–xii.
67. Lane-Poole, *Saladin and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, iii. See also T. Ali, *The Book of Saladin* (London and New York, 1998). This is a lyrical evocation of Saladin.
68. M. C. Lyons and D. E. P. Jackson, *Saladin: The Politics of the Holy War* (Cambridge, 1995).
69. A. S. Ehrenkreutz, *Saladin* (Albany, NY, 1972).
70. Ibid., 238.
71. William Of Tyre, *Historia Rerum in Partibus Transmarinis Gestarum*, 1000.

Ayyubids

A Muslim dynasty of Kurdish origin. Its name derives from Saladin's father, Ayyub, although it was the successes of Saladin himself that established it. After Saladin's death in 1193, the Ayyubids ruled Egypt until 1250 and Syria for another decade. They also had cadet branches in Mesopotamia and Yemen. Like the Buyids and Seljuqs of Persia before them, they governed as a loose-knit and often discordant confederacy.

The Establishment of Ayyubid Power

Ayyub and his brother Shirkuh both hailed from Dvin in Armenia; they fought for the Turkish warlords Zengi and his son Nur al-Din, Saladin's two great predecessors in the fight against the Franks. Saladin accompanied Shirkuh on three expeditions to Egypt in the 1160s. After Shirkuh's death in 1169, Saladin assumed power in Egypt in the name of Nur al-Din and overthrew the Shiʿite Fatimid regime there. Although a rift developed between the two men, it never developed into open warfare because of the death of Nur al-Din in 1174. That same year Saladin dispatched his brother Turanshah to conquer Yemen.

During much of Saladin's first decade as an independent ruler (*c.* 1174–84), he was occupied with subjugating his Muslim opponents and creating a secure power base in Egypt and Syria for himself and his family. Then from 1185 onwards he turned his full attention to the Franks. In 1187 he achieved his famous victory against the army of the Kingdom of Jerusalem at the battle of Hattin and reconquered the city of Jerusalem for Islam. The Third Crusade (1189–92), launched in response to this loss, ended in truce and stalemate.

Saladin died a year later; despite his prestigious successes, he had failed to rid the Levant of the Franks, who regrouped at their new capital of Acre and still controlled crucial Mediterranean ports. Saladin's brother, the austere Sayf al-Din al-ʻAdil (known to the Franks as Saphadin), had acted as his principal, indeed indispensable, helper in governing his empire, both administratively and militarily. His involvement in drawing up the peace treaty with Richard the Lionheart in 1192 was especially valuable.

The Ayyubids after Saladin

Saladin did not envisage a centralised state as his legacy. Instead, he bequeathed the three main provinces of his empire (Cairo, Damascus and Aleppo) to his sons, hoping that this arrangement would ensure lasting Ayyubid power. But his desired father–son succession did not take root, nor did primogeniture prevail among Saladin's successors. Within the clan, might was right. After Saladin's death, al-ʻAdil's role as senior family member asserted itself; indeed, Saladin's sons were no match for al-ʻAdil's long experience and diplomatic skills. By 1200 he had reorganised Saladin's inheritance plans in favour of his own sons, deposed Saladin's son al-ʻAziz ʻUthman in Cairo, and secured the overall position of sultan for himself. Only in Aleppo did Saladin's direct descendants continue to rule: Saladin's son al-Zahir, after submitting to al-ʻAdil, was allowed to keep his territory, which remained in his family until the Mongol invasion of 1260. In this complicated power struggle after Saladin's death, a key role was played by the regiments of *mamluk*s (slave soldiers) recruited by Saladin (the Salahiyya) and his uncle Shirkuh (the Asadiyya). Al-ʻAdil was greatly assisted by the Salahiyya. Saladin's expansionist aims were continued under al-ʻAdil, who masterminded the Ayyubid acquisition of more Zangid and Artuqid territories. He secured his north-eastern frontier in 1209–10, established truces with the Franks that lasted for most of his reign, and traded with the Italian maritime states.

In 1218, shortly after the arrival of the Fifth Crusade (1217–21), al-ʻAdil died, allegedly of shock. He was succeeded by his son al-Kamil, whose brothers, al-Muʻazzam and al-Ashraf, supported him in this crisis, but after Damietta was recovered, this short-lived family solidarity gave way to disunity and conflict. The main contenders in the long and convoluted power struggle that followed were al-Kamil and his brother al-Muʻazzam at Damascus. By

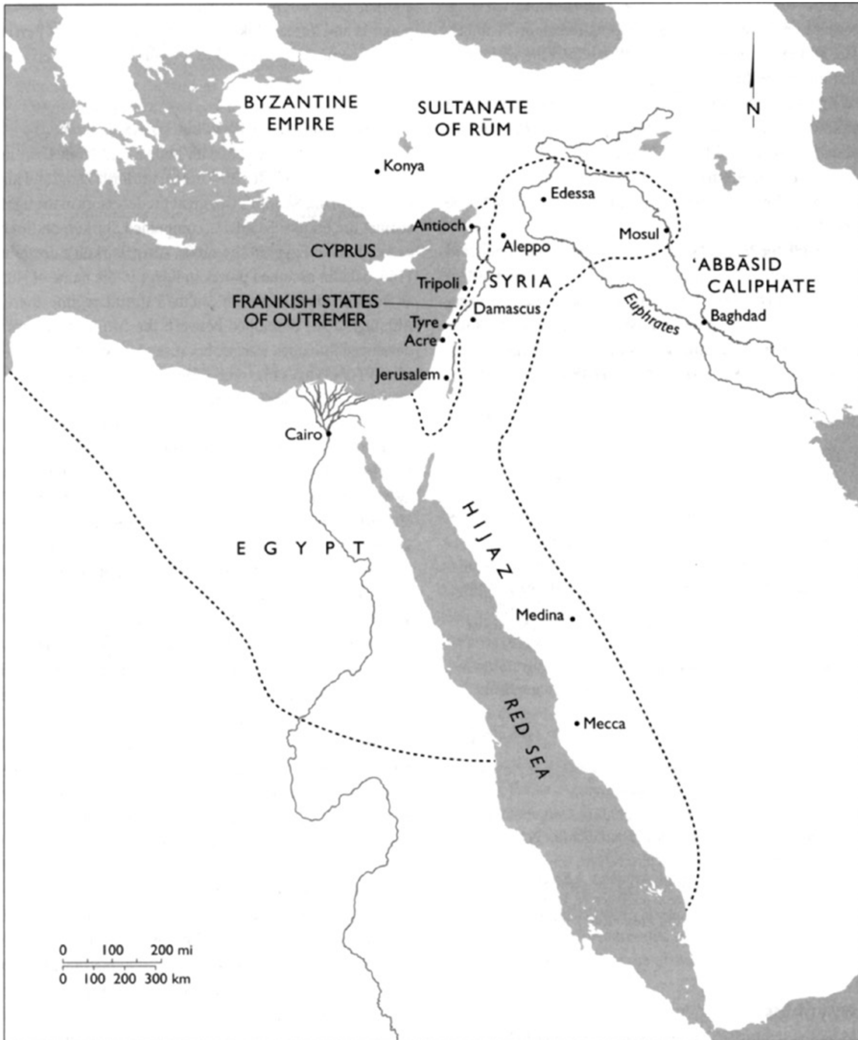

Figure 11.1 The Ayyubid territories in 1187

1229 al-Kamil, with the help of al-Ashraf in Mesopotamia, emerged as principal ruler of the Ayyubids. Already in 1226, al-Kamil, an astute politician, had begun negotiations with Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor, to bolster himself against al-Mu'azzam and to deflect the imminent Crusade. However, by the time Frederick arrived in Acre in 1228, al-Mu'azzam had already died. Secret negotiations between al-Kamil and Frederick resulted in the

Treaty of Jaffa (1229); in it al-Kamil ceded Jerusalem to Frederick, who was permitted to fortify the city, but al-Kamil kept a Muslim enclave, including the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. This piece of Realpolitik caused widespread disapproval on both sides, and even al-Kamil's own preachers protested outside his tent. The Muslim chronicler Sibt b. al-Jawzi recorded that when al-Kamil gave Jerusalem to Frederick 'all hell broke loose in the lands of Islam' [Sibt b. al-Jawzi, *Mir'at al-Zaman fi Ta'rikh al-A'yan*, 2 vols (Hyderabad, 1951–2), 2, 653]. However, some modern scholars have interpreted the Treaty of Jaffa more positively, viewing al-'Adil and Frederick as farsighted in their attempts to obtain a more lasting peace and to maintain the holy sites of both Islam and Christianity under the protection of their own adherents.

The death of al-Kamil in 1238 ushered in another turbulent period. His dispossessed eldest son, al-Salih Ayyub, who had been sent to rule Upper Mesopotamia, disputed the succession in Egypt. He deposed his brother al-'Adil II and took power in Cairo in 1240. While he was in Hisn Kayfa, al-Salih Ayyub had allied himself with a group of Qipchaq Turks: they were known as the Khwarazmians because they had fought in Central Asia for the ill-fated ruler of Khwarazm, Jalal al-Din, against the Mongols in 1220s. After his death (1231), the Khwarazmians joined the service of al-Salih Ayyub as mercenaries. In 1244, under their infamous leader Berke Khan, they sacked Jerusalem, to general condemnation. They then joined Ayyub's army near Gaza and fought that same year against three Ayyubid princes, as well as Frankish forces. The battle of La Forbie (Harbiyya) was a clear victory for al-Salih Ayyub and his Khwarazmian allies. Ayyub took Jerusalem (August 1244) and then Damascus (1245). The Ayyubid prince of Homs destroyed the Khwarazmians in 1246.

Al-Salih Ayyub fell ill at the time of the Crusade to the East of Louis IX, king of France (1248–54). The Crusaders occupied the city of Damietta in 1249; later that year al-Salih Ayyub died while encamped at Mansura on the delta. In 1250 the Crusaders were defeated by the sultan's own slave troops (the Bahriyya *mamluk*s). Then in a *coup d'état* they murdered Turanshah, the son and heir of al-Salih, and terminated Ayyubid rule, raising one of their own number to the rank of sultan and thus inaugurating the Mamluk sultanate.

Religious Policies

In their religio-political discourse, the Ayyubids called themselves *mujahid*s, that is, fighters of the jihad (holy war). However, they were criticised, even in their own time, for their lukewarm prosecution of jihad. As the chronicler Ibn al-Athir (d. 1233) remarked: 'Amongst the rulers of Islam we do not see one who wishes to wage jihad' [Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil fi'l-ta'rikh*, ed. C. J. Tornberg, 12 vols (Uppsala, 1851–76), 12, 7]. But the circumstances in which the Ayyubids found themselves had changed from Saladin's last years. Jerusalem, which had been a unique focus for jihad for Nur al-Din and Saladin, had been reconquered. The resources to finance more military enterprises were limited, and Ayyubid engagement with the Franks would, it was feared, engender more Crusades from Europe. Even Saladin had preferred to exercise diplomatic means with the Franks until the period immediately preceding the battle of Hattin.

Despite their pious stance toward Jerusalem, the Ayyubids were prepared, when necessary, as the Treaty of Jaffa showed, to use it as a pawn on the Levantine chessboard. Several Ayyubid rulers sponsored religious monuments in the Holy City, but the dynasty never chose it as a capital, preferring Cairo or Damascus. During the Fifth Crusade in 1219, the Ayyubid prince al-Muʿazzam (d. 1226), who had beautified the Holy City only a few years earlier, dismantled its fortifications lest it should fall into Frankish hands again. This action, justified as sorrowful necessity by al-Muʿazzam, provoked widespread condemnation among the local Muslim population, many of whom fled the city. Worse was to come in 1229 when al-Kamil actually ceded Jerusalem to Emperor Frederick II. The Holy City remained a bargaining counter, being controlled again by the Ayyubids in 1239 and then handed back to the Franks five years later before its sack by the Khwarazmians and its return to Muslim control.

In other respects, the Ayyubids, as Kurdish outsiders and usurpers, were keen to prove their good Sunni Muslim credentials, building religious monuments in all their domains and insisting on grandiose jihad pretensions in their correspondence, coins and monumental inscriptions. They founded no less than sixty-three religious colleges (Arab. madrasas) in Damascus alone. They welcomed Muslim mystics (Sufis), for whom they founded cloisters

Figure 11.2 The main entrance to the citadel of Aleppo

(Arab. *khanqah*s). Saladin had acquired great prestige by abolishing the 200-year-old rival Isma'ili Shi'ite caliphate of Cairo. But the relationship of his successors with the 'Abbasid caliphate was complex. On the one hand, like earlier military dynasties such as the Seljuq Turks, the Ayyubids sought public legitimisation from the 'Abbasid caliph in Baghdad. Caliphal ambassadors mediated in inter-Ayyubid disputes. In his efforts to renew the 'Abbasid caliphate, the caliph al-Nasir (d. 1225) created around himself a network of spiritual alliances with Muslim rulers, including the Ayyubids. Yet, such symbolic links did not remove mutual suspicion. Both sides feared each other's expansionist aims, Saladin complained of the caliph's lack of zeal in jihad against the Franks. Nor did Saladin's descendants offer help to the caliph against a possible attack from the Mongols in 1221–2.

Government and Institutions

Ayyubid government was an amalgam of Seljuq and Fatimid practices. Saladin inherited bureaucratic traditions brought from the east to Syria by Seljuq rulers and commanders. His family had worked for such Turkish leaders and assimilated their military and administrative traditions. In Egypt continuity also existed between Fatimid and Ayyubid practice, especially in taxation. The Ayyubids expanded the existing system of *iqta'* (allotments of land given to high-ranking army officers in exchange for military and administrative duties) to the benefit of their kinsmen and commanders. Armed with the revenues of Egypt, Saladin built up a strong army, which included his own contingents (Arab. *'askar*s) as well as *iqta'*-holders, Turcoman troops sent by his vassals and auxiliary forces. The Ayyubid armies were composed of Kurds and Turks, with the latter predominating. The recruitment of slave soldiers (Arab. *mamluk*s), always a feature of Ayyubid military policy, intensified under al-Salih Ayyub. He focused his power on Egypt and centralised his administration on Cairo, thus foreshadowing the preeminence of that city for the Ayyubids' successors, the Mamluk dynasty. Apart from Saladin's brief attempt to build a navy, the Ayyubids were not interested in fighting the Franks at sea. The Ayyubids did not construct castles in the Frankish manner, preferring instead to build or strengthen city fortifications. Thus they improved the city walls in Cairo, as well as building the citadel, and they did likewise in Damascus, Aleppo, Hims, Aleppo, Harran, Amid and elsewhere.

The Ayyubids preferred détente rather than jihad with the Franks. During the Ayyubid period, the remaining Frankish states became fully integrated as local Levantine polities. The Ayyubids allied with them and sometimes fought alongside them against fellow Muslims. Trade, which had prospered from the 1180s onwards in their lands, was important for the Ayyubids, and they granted trading privileges to Venetian and Pisan merchants in 1207–8. The fragmented nature of Ayyubid power led to a proliferation of small courts based on individual cities, such as Cairo, Damascus and Hama, where the Ayyubid princes patronised the arts. Some, such as al-Amjad Bahram Shah and Abu'l-Fida', were themselves men of letters. Al-Kamil also composed poetry and enjoyed intellectual discussions, asking scholars searching questions on a range of subjects. He and his father, al-'Adil, involved themselves in the precise details of administration. Yet the generous architectural patronage that transformed the faces of a few cities had severe side effects. Other centres were starved of resources, as their minimal heritage of Ayyubid buildings suggests.

A lynchpin of Ayyubid rule was the maintenance of a united Syro-Egyptian polity. The two key Ayyubid principalities were Cairo and Damascus; the other Ayyubid states never enjoyed as much power and prestige. When Damascus and Cairo were united under one ruler, equilibrium and stability prevailed. Each time an overarching leader appeared (and some rulers of the dynasty were clearly exceptional – not only Saladin but also al-'Adil, al-Kamil, and al-Salih Ayyub), this was the hard-won result of personal charisma and diplomacy as well as a show of military strength. The ensuing tenuous unity would dissipate at that ruler's death.

Traditionally, the Ayyubids have been cast as opportunistic, wily and self-serving politicians. This image emerges, for example, from an emphasis on their attitude to Jerusalem. Saladin had been the exception in his focus on jihad aimed at the reconquest of Jerusalem. For his successors, Jerusalem was dispensable. Egypt was their most valuable possession, and they were ready to sacrifice the Holy Land to safeguard Egypt. Moreover, Ayyubid history was much less concerned with the loss or gain of Jerusalem than with the survival of individual princelings and fiefdoms in an atmosphere of mutual rivalry and in the face of grave external threats. Indeed, at that time, the Islamic world was assailed simultaneously by the Mongol invasions and by continuing

Crusader attacks. The Arab chronicler Ibn al-Athir (d. 1233), reflecting with unusual emotion on the Mongol threat, called the Muslim year 617 (AD 1219–20) the most dangerous that Islam had ever experienced. Externally, then, the Ayyubids had to contend with grave dangers, familiar and unfamiliar. The enemy came from east and west; the double impact was hard to repel. Between 1240 and 1245, the Mongol threat came ever closer. After the Mongol invasion of Anatolia (the battle of Köse Dagh, 1243), Muslim anxiety in northern Syria grew. Although the Ayyubids were spared the full onslaught of the Mongols, they had to suffer the demographic fallout from the Mongol invasions of central Asia and Iran. The Khwarazmians, driven out by the Mongols, became a loose cannon in Ayyubid territories, terrifying and undisciplined; they could be recruited into the Ayyubid armies when required, but they were out of control when they sacked Jerusalem in 1244. Their savage strength contributed to the victory at the key battle of La Forbie.

What threat did the Ayyubids pose for the Franks after Saladin's death? Clearly the Ayyubids were beset with a multiplicity of enemies both inside and outside their realms, and this situation helped the Franks to stay on in the Levant and slowly to marshal their resources again. Indeed, in the early decades of the thirteenth century, the Franks gradually recovered, and despite their reduced lands they still held the ports and were a force to be reckoned with. Moreover, the Ayyubids had to deal with a steady stream of Crusades and campaigns coming from the West after the loss of Jerusalem; these were aimed at the heart of their power, Cairo. In the event, they did not press home their obvious advantages and were not sufficiently strong, united or motivated to rid the Muslim world of the Franks. The Franks, for their part, enjoyed a brief intermezzo in the Ayyubid period, positioned as it was between the intense campaigns conducted by Saladin in his last years and the blistering attacks of the Mamluks of Egypt that awaited them after 1250. However, the Ayyubid victory at La Forbie was a devastating blow to Frankish manpower and was as serious a military defeat as Hattin. On this occasion the Franks had unwisely abandoned their strategy of avoiding pitched battles, and thus their steady recovery after the Third Crusade had been jeopardised. La Forbie destroyed the campaign army of the Frankish kingdom.

It is also important to view the Ayyubids within a wider medieval Islamic context. They had to contend with other neighbouring states: the Seljuqs

of Rum, now in full efflorescence; the Turkish dynasties of Mesopotamia, including the Artuqids and the Zengids; and the Christian kingdoms of the Caucasus. Given all these external dangers, the fragmented nature of Ayyubid rule, and periodic episodes of extreme internal insecurity, it is perhaps surprising that the Ayyubids managed to exercise stable government for as long as they did.

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12

Ayyubid Jerusalem: A Historical Introduction

Introduction

The Ayyubids were the family dynasty of Saladin, the famous Kurdish Muslim hero of the Crusades.[1] The dynasty is normally dated from Saladin's career onwards (564/1169)[2] but is named after Saladin's father Ayyub. In their heyday, the Ayyubids ruled Egypt, Syria, Palestine, the Jazira and Yemen.[3] Whilst Cairo was the real hub of Ayyubid sovereignty, previous detailed studies of the Kurdish Ayyubid dynasty have for the most part examined the other important centres of political power, Damascus[4] and Aleppo.[5] This book, which focuses on the Holy City of Jerusalem in Ayyubid times, therefore offers a new way of looking at the dynasty. The individual chapters of this book provide new insights into this vital period of medieval Islamic and Crusader history and into the fate of the Holy City in troubled times.

This introductory part of the book has three aims. Firstly, it will give a general historical overview of the Ayyubid period to give a background to the detailed analyses of individual themes provided by other scholars in this book. Secondly, this chapter will focus in some detail on the three major episodes of Ayyubid rule in Jerusalem – Saladin in Jerusalem, the treaty signed by the Ayyubid sultan al-Kamil and Frederick II of Sicily in 626/1229, and the sack of the city by the Khwarazmians in 642/1244. Thirdly, there will be a wider analysis of some major issues arising from a study of Ayyubid Jerusalem.

A Historical Overview of the Ayyubid Period (564–648/1169–1250)

Born in 532/1138 in Tikrit in northern Iraq, Saladin[6] came from a family of prominent Kurdish soldiers who rose to power in the service of the Turkish Muslim rulers of Iraq and Syria. Saladin's father Ayyub and his uncle Shirkuh hailed from Dvin in Armenia and served the Turkish warlords Zengi and his son Nur al-Din, Saladin's two great predecessors in the Muslim 'Counter-Crusade'. Saladin worked for Nur al-Din, who fought the Crusaders[7] and laid the foundations for the later successes of Saladin. Under Nur al-Din, a dynamic reawakening of jihad spirit, focused on the recapture of Jerusalem, accompanied Muslim military victories against the Crusaders. These victories saw the tide finally beginning to turn in favour of the Muslims.

Saladin accompanied Shirkuh on three expeditions to Egypt in the 1160s. After Shirkuh's death in 564/1169, Saladin took control in Egypt in the name of Nur al-Din. In 566/1171 he put an end to the Fatimid Isma'ili Shi'ite caliphate which had ruled there for over 200 years, and he re-introduced Sunni Islam, re-establishing allegiance to the 'Abbasid caliph in Baghdad. A growing rift between Saladin and his master Nur al-Din was prevented from developing into open warfare by the death of Nur al-Din in 569/1174. That same year Saladin sent his brother Turanshah to conquer Yemen.

After his master's death Saladin's major concern was to gain credibility as the successor to Nur al-Din, in the face of the latter's family who aspired to rule his territories. As Nur al-Din had done, Saladin spent his first decade as an independent ruler fighting fellow-Muslims, in order to establish a unified power base for himself and his family, and he engaged in combat with the Crusaders only intermittently. By 578/1183 he had united Syria and Egypt under his rule and he finally turned his attention to the Crusaders. In 582/1187 he launched a major campaign against them. He met the combined forces of the Kingdom of Jerusalem at the Horns of Hattin near Tiberias on Saturday, 25 Rabi' II 583/4 July 1187 and gained his most famous military victory.[8] Acre capitulated five days later and by early September the whole coast from Gaza to Jubail (with the exception of Tyre) was in Saladin's hands. He then advanced on Jerusalem, which surrendered on 27 Rajab/2 October that same year.

This much-desired re-conquest of Jerusalem was certainly the psychological climax of Saladin's career, but the stark reality was that the Crusaders were still in possession of 350 miles of coastline and a number of key ports. There was still work for Saladin to do. He followed up the re-conquest of Jerusalem by taking more strongholds in northern Syria in 584/1188 but he failed to take the port of Tyre. The advent of the Third Crusade, launched in response to the loss of Jerusalem, saw the investing and eventual surrender of Acre to the Franks in Jumada II 587/July 1191; Acre became the new capital of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem. However, Richard the Lionheart failed to retake Jerusalem and he concluded a truce with Saladin in 588/1192, before departing definitively from the Holy Land. Saladin died on 26 Safar 589/3 March 1193. Jerusalem was now back in Muslim hands, but the Crusaders still retained a foothold on the Syrian coast, they ruled three states on traditionally Muslim soil – Antioch, Tripoli and Acre – and they were to remain in the Middle East for almost another century. So Saladin had failed to oust them from the area.

Saladin did not envisage a centralised state after his death. He divided his empire among his relations, bequeathing to three of his sons the main centres: Damascus, Aleppo and Cairo. In the ensuing power struggle it was Saladin's brother, al-ʿAdil, a seasoned politician, rather than Saladin's sons,[9] who had emerged triumphant by 598/1202 and assumed the title of sultan. This kind of inter-clan struggle was deep-rooted. Yet, despite the fragmented nature of Ayyubid rule, three rulers, al-ʿAdil (596–615/1200–18), al-Kamil (615–635/1218–38) and Najm al-Din Ayyub (637–47/1240–9), generally managed to exercise overarching control of the Ayyubid empire, albeit with extreme difficulty at times. The line in Aleppo remained amongst Saladin's direct descendants. Other small principalities were set up in Hims, Hama, Transjordan and Mesopotamia. Two of these – Hama and Mesopotamia – survived after 648/1250.

Al-ʿAdil had acted as Saladin's principal, indeed indispensable, helper in governing his empire – administratively and militarily – and after Saladin's death, al-ʿAdil's role as senior family member became paramount.[10] During his reign he established his own sons in important Ayyubid centres of power. Al-ʿAdil secured his north-eastern frontier and in 600/1204 he concluded a peace treaty for six years with the Crusader ruler Amalric. When this truce

came to an end, he had it renewed for a further five years in Safar 609/July 1212.[11] In 615/1218, the Fifth Crusade arrived in Egypt and al-ʿAdil sent his son al-Muʿazzam to protect Jerusalem. After al-ʿAdil's ill-timed death in Jumada I 615/August 1218,[12] three of his sons – al-Kamil, al-Ashraf and al-Muʿazzam – initially stayed united in the face of the Fifth Crusade.

Soon after the death of al-ʿAdil in 615/1218, al-Muʿazzam took control in Damascus; his territories included Jerusalem. His brother al-Kamil became ruler in Egypt. After the termination of the Fifth Crusade, the united front of between the three Ayyubid brothers, al-Kamil, al-Muʿazzam and al-Ashraf (in the Jazira), fragmented. At the same time, a new and menacing polity in the east, the Khwarazmians, displaced from their lands on the lower Oxus by Mongol movements westwards, were occupying new territory south of the Caucasus.[13] In 623/1226 al-Muʿazzam asked Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah for military help against his brother al-Kamil. In response to this, al-Kamil also called on another foreign force for military support, the German emperor Frederick II in Sicily. Despite the fact that it was al-Muʿazzam who governed the Holy City, al-Kamil proposed the handing over of Jerusalem to Frederick. Not surprisingly, al-Muʿazzam was not willing to do this. However, most opportunely for al-Kamil, al-Muʿazzam died in 624/1227. His lands were inherited by his son, the inexperienced al-Nasir Da'ud, from whom al-Kamil then captured Jerusalem and Nablus. At a meeting in Tall ʿAjul he agreed with his brother al-Ashraf to divide up their nephew's territories. Al-Nasir Da'ud fled to Damascus to which his uncles laid siege around the end of the year 625/1228. At this point al-Kamil was in a good position to secure the Holy Land for himself but he had promised to make an agreement with Frederick. He may even have regretted his earlier action in making the offer of Jerusalem to the German emperor now that the obstacle of al-Muʿazzam had been removed.

The peace treaty of Jaffa, signed on 22 Rabiʿ I 626/18 February 1229 by representatives of al-Kamil and Frederick, gave Jerusalem and Bethlehem back to the Latin Kingdom but kept the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock as a Muslim enclave. Within Jerusalem itself, Muslims were allowed the right of entry to their holy places and freedom of worship. The peace treaty would last for ten Christian years. Frederick made his ceremonial entry into Jerusalem on 19 Rabiʿ II 626/17 March 1229. On 5 Jumada II/1

May 1229 he left the Holy Land. The death of al-Kamil on 20 Rajab 635/8 March 1238[14] ushered in a turbulent period during which the treaty between al-Kamil and Frederick came to an end.

The son of al-Kamil, al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub, the last Ayyubid sultan of Egypt, took power there in 637/1240 and a further period of internecine strife ensued. From his base in Cairo, Najm al-Din Ayyub made an alliance with the Khwarazmians, but he deflected them from his own territories, unleashing these terrifying foes on Ayyubid Palestine. On 3 Safar 642/11 July 1244 the Khwarazmians entered and sacked Jerusalem to widespread condemnation. The battle of Harbiyya[15] that same year saw Najm al-Din Ayyub with his Khwarazmian allies defeat a coalition of Syrian Ayyubids (al-Nasir, al-Mansur and Isma'il) and Crusaders.

Najm al-Din Ayyub died on 14 Sha'ban 647/22 November 1249 and the Ayyubid dynasty was soon overthrown in a coup instigated by his own slave troops (*mamluk*s), who raised one of their number to the rank of sultan. At the time of his last illness a crusade was launched against Egypt under the French king Louix IX. Egypt was saved by the new ruling dynasty, the Mamluks, who by 690/1291 had removed the Crusaders definitively from the Levant.

The Policies of the Ayyubids

The Ayyubids have been somewhat neglected by scholars. Much of what has been written about them has focused on their relations with the Crusaders. But it is important also to view them within a wider medieval Islamic context. During their rule the Ayyubids had to contend with other neighbouring states – the Seljuqs of Anatolia, now in full efflorescence, the Turkish dynasties of the Jazira, such as the Artuqids and the Zengids, the Christian kingdoms of the Caucasus and the Khwarazmian Turks further east.

Saladin's reign was both a culmination and a beginning.[16] His period in power continued the strategy employed by Nur al-Din in his programme of revitalising Sunni Islam and focusing jihad on Jerusalem. Both leaders relied on the all-important tight bond between themselves and the religious classes of Syria. The post-Saladin period, however, saw the emergence of different trends, including a shift towards Cairo as the major centre of power, a tendency which would reach complete fruition under the succeeding dynasty,

the Mamluks of Cairo. This process began with the reign of his brother al-ʿAdil who ruled from Cairo. It is also important to note that Saladin's successors in power depended on an increasingly militarised government[17] and that by the time of the seizure of power by the Mamluks, the successor to the throne would come from the ranks of the army commanders themselves. The Ayyubid period had paved the way for this, allowing the military to enjoy increasing power at the very heart of the sultanate.[18]

A key aim of Ayyubid government – the need to rule a united Syro-Egyptian polity – was already visible in Saladin's time. After his death, however, the Ayyubid empire was dominated by the precarious relationship between the rulers of the two key Ayyubid principalities, Cairo and Damascus, and by the shifting alliances of minor Ayyubid princes between these two major centres. Some rulers of the dynasty were clearly exceptional – not only Saladin but also al-ʿAdil and al-Kamil stand out in their different ways. When Cairo and Damascus were united under one ruler, equilibrium and stability prevailed. Each time a leader with overarching authority appeared, this was the hard-won result of personal charisma and diplomacy, but such dominance would dissipate at that ruler's death and periods of great internal instability would then follow. The Ayyubid confederation, by its very nature loose, pragmatic and supportive of local interests, enabled the Crusaders to stay in the Levant and, indeed, briefly to retake Jerusalem on at least two occasions. The Ayyubids prioritised the protection of Egypt, and the Crusaders, recognising that Egypt held the key to recovering the Holy Land, attacked it on a number of occasions during the Ayyubid period – in 593/1197, 613/1217, 626/1229 and 646/1249.[19]

Saladin inherited governmental traditions brought from the east to Syria by Seljuq rulers and commanders. His family had worked with and for such Turkish leaders and they had assimilated their military and governmental traditions. In Egypt continuity also existed between Fatimid and Ayyubid practice, especially in taxation. This process is mirrored in the career of the Qadi al-Fadil, a Sunni Muslim, who had served the Fatimid government in Cairo but later became Saladin's head of chancery. The Ayyubids expanded the existing system of *iqtaʿ* (allotments of land, given to high-ranking army officers in exchange for certain military and administrative duties) to the benefit of their kinsmen and commanders. Armed with the revenues of

Egypt, Saladin developed a strong army which included his own contingents (*'askar*s) as well as *iqta'*-holders, vassals and auxiliary forces. The Ayyubid armies were composed of Kurds and Turks, with the latter predominating. The recruitment of slave soldiers, always a feature of Ayyubid military policy, intensified under Najm al-Din Ayyub.

The Ayyubids built on the strong Sunni environment which had developed in Syria, and especially in Damascus, during the rule of Nur al-Din. He cultivated a close working relationship with Sunni circles in Syria and sponsored a vast programme of endowing religious monuments to underpin and consolidate Sunni Islam after the collapse of the Fatimids and in face of the need to encourage the jihad spirit against the Franks. Like the Seljuq and Zengid dynasties before them, the Ayyubids presented themselves as staunch supporters of Sunni Islam and in this respect they had begun spectacularly well with Saladin's abolition of the 200 year-old Isma'ili Shi'ite caliphate of Cairo. Indeed, in the eyes of many modern Sunni Muslims, it is this action – the bringing back of Egypt into the Sunni fold – rather than his re-conquest of Jerusalem which is regarded as his greatest achievement.[20]

Saladin's successors were also keen to prove their impeccable Sunni credentials, building religious monuments in Jerusalem, Damascus, Cairo and elsewhere. They founded many religious colleges in Damascus alone (almost all the Ayyubids were Shafi'is[21] or Hanafis). They welcomed Sufis, for whom they founded cloisters (*khanqah*s). By the early thirteenth century the Ayyubids in Egypt, despite their general preference for the Shafi'i *madhhab*, had tried to introduce a pan-Sunni approach to Islam which sponsored all four *madhhab*s with equal recognition for all four.[22] This broad-minded attitude was mirrored in their activities in Jerusalem.

As was customary, Muslim chroniclers wrote glowing accounts of acts of piety performed by individual Ayyubid sultans.[23] Less common were laudatory comments about them from Crusader chroniclers, except in the case of Saladin and his brother, al-'Adil, both of whom gained respect and admiration in Outremer and back in Europe. The favourable remarks by Matthew Paris about al-Kamil are therefore unusual; under the year 1238 he praises the 'most powerful sultan' who, about to die, 'left large sums of money to the sick Christians who remained in the house of the Hospitallers, and had liberated a great many confined prisoners, and performed many other deeds of charity'.

The same source continues by saying that the emperor Frederick lamented his death, having hoped that the sultan would receive baptism.[24]

The Ayyubids' relationship with the Baghdad caliphate was complex. On the one hand, like earlier military dynasties that had usurped power, the Ayyubids sought legitimisation from the caliph in Baghdad. Caliphal ambassadors mediated in inter-Ayyubid disputes. The 'Abbasid caliph al-Nasir (d. 622/1225) created around himself a network of spiritual alliances with Muslim rulers, including the Ayyubids. On the other hand, such symbolic links did not remove mutual suspicion. Both sides feared each other's expansionist aims. Saladin complained of the caliph's lacklustre attitude to jihad against the Crusaders. Nor did Saladin's descendants help the caliph against the Mongols in the 1220s.

Traditionally, the Ayyubids have been cast in modern scholarship as opportunistic, wily and self-serving politicians. But their decisions concerning Jerusalem were taken when no other alternatives were available and in order to ensure military support against real or perceived dangers. Even Saladin, despite his focus on jihad aimed at the re-conquest of Jerusalem, practised policies of shifting alliances and truces.[25] For his successors Jerusalem was dispensable. They were concerned with their survival as individual princes in an atmosphere of frequent mutual rivalry. This Ayyubid survival depended on local Levantine solidarity. In times of internal crisis and external aggression the Ayyubids would ally with their local neighbours, even if they were Crusaders, to defend their territory.

The Ayyubids and Jihad

In the twelfth century, Jerusalem, now lost to the Muslims, became the focus of intense longing to them. As the century progressed, the loss of the Holy City and the shame of its being occupied by the Franks must have become more and more difficult to endure. Like the Children of Israel by the waters of Babylon, the Muslims of Syria and Palestine grieved for the sites of the Holy City. This yearning to repossess Jerusalem was made concrete by two charismatic Muslim leaders, Nur al-Din and Saladin. Both placed the re-conquest of Jerusalem at the heart of their ambition. The Holy City simply had to be taken and it was the hitherto dormant spirit of jihad which triggered the unification and encirclement of Crusader lands, the necessary

basis for its eventual conquest. An increasingly intense campaign of jihad, promoted through an alliance between the warlords and the religious classes, was focused not on the borders of Islam, but right within the Islamic world itself, on the city of Jerusalem.

During much of his military career – from his achieving independent power on the death of Nur al-Din until his recapture of Jerusalem – Saladin is presented in the Muslim sources as making the Holy City the supreme goal of his anti-Crusader propaganda. Feelings of increasing emotional intensity and yearning for Jerusalem are exploited to the full by Saladin's scribes and preachers in the build-up to the recapture of the city. The year before the re-conquest, his secretary and biographer, ʿImad al-Din, declared in a letter, with the confidence of imminent victory:

> The sabres of jihad rattle with joy . . . The Dome of the Rock rejoices in the good news that the Qu'ran of which it was deprived will return to it.[26]

Choosing the best possible day to enter Jerusalem in triumph, Saladin waited to take possession of it until Friday, 27 Rajab 583/2 October 1187, the anniversary of the Prophet's Night Journey into Heaven. This event was the climax of Saladin's career, the fulfilment of his jihad campaign. The great gilded cross at the top of the cupola of the Dome of the Rock was pulled down as soon as possible by Saladin's men.

According to al-Maqrizi, an envoy from the caliph, al-Shahrazuri, was sent back to Baghdad with gifts and Frankish prisoners. On this occasion two crosses were taken to the caliph, one of which was the cross on the top of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem.[27]

The foundation inscription on the Salahiyya madrasa, named after Saladin and dated 588/1192, encapsulates his achievements and his importance within the jihad milieu of his time.[28] Part of the inscription, consisting of five lines, runs as follows:

> In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful. And whatever blessing *(niʿma)* you have received, is certainly from God.[29] This blessed madrasa was founded as a *waqf* by our master al-Malik al-Nasir Salah al-Dunya wa'l-Din, the sultan of Islam and the Muslims, Abu'l-Muzaffar Yusuf b. Ayyub b. Shadhi, the revitaliser of the state of the Commander of the

> Faithful – may God glorify his victories and assemble for him the good of this world and of the next.[30]

The timing of the founding of this monument, soon after the two events which formed the climax of Saladin's career – the victory at Hattin and the re-conquest of the Holy City – would seem to suggest that the Qur'anic quotation in the inscription is a reminder of these great victories. Indeed, Baha' al-Din b. Shaddad, Saladin's other biographer, speaks of Hattin as a 'blessing for the Muslims' and states that the sultan saw the favour *(ni'ma)* of God towards him.[31] Such a short Qur'anic quotation thus serves its purpose well. The word *ni'ma* must have been on everyone's lips. Ibn Zaki's famous sermon preached on Saladin's entry into Jerusalem includes the following lines:

> How great a favour *(ni'ma)* was that which rendered you the army by whose hands the Sacred City was recaptured.[32]

What of the prosecution of jihad after Saladin's paramount aim had been achieved? Not long after the re-conquest of Jerusalem, even the celebrated scholar Ibn al-Jawzi in distant Baghdad was moved to write a laudatory work[33] in the genre of the *Merits of Jerusalem* (*Fada'il al-Quds*) literature,[34] normally written out of local pride by scholars who lived nearer to the Holy City. This work includes chapters describing the 'wonders which are in Jerusalem', the merit of the Holy City 'at which God Himself looks twice each day', and the merits of visiting Jerusalem and of praying near the Dome of the Rock.[35]

The Ayyubids are certainly praised as enthusiastic warriors of jihad in their monumental inscriptions and chancellery correspondence.[36] Moreover, the tradition of jihad poetry, which had flourished in the build-up and the re-conquest of Jerusalem, continued unabated under the Ayyubids, although some of its claims rang rather hollow in this age of relative détente with the Franks. The Ayyubid poet, Ibn al-Nabih, praises Saladin's brother, al-'Adil, declaring:

> You have purified Jerusalem of their (the Franks') filth
> After it had been a refuge for pigs.[37]

In 616/1219 after the fall of Damietta, the Syrian chronicler and preacher Sibt b. al-Jawzi read out in the Great Mosque in Damascus a letter which the Ayyubid prince al-Mu'azzam had written to him; in it al-Mu'azzam

mentioned explicitly that he wished to stimulate the people to jihad.[38] The poet Ibn ʿUnayn praises the valour of the sons of al-ʿAdil in the jihad:

> 'Tis a family pure in origin, excellent in race, copious in liberality, pleasing to behold.
> Their steeds scorn to drink from a stream unless its waters be encrimsoned with the blood of battles.[39]

The same poet celebrates the victory of the sultan al-Kamil over the Franks at Damietta in 617/1221 in the following stirring lines:[40]

> He marched towards Damietta with every highborn champion,
> Viewing the descent into battle as the most salubrious of descents,
> And he removed from there the miscreants of Byzantium, and the
> Hearts of certain men were gladdened that afterwards made compact with sorrow;
> And he cleansed her of their filth with his sword – a hero
> Regarding the acquisition of praise as the noblest of prizes.

The word used for 'filth' (*rijs*) in this poem denotes ritual impurity. Indeed, images of pollution and purification abound in the Muslim jihad literature of the Crusading period.

However, despite such panegyrics, it is well known that the reputation of Saladin's successors in prosecuting the jihad was often lacklustre,[41] and Ibn Shaddad explicitly expressed his worries that Saladin's family would not carry out the jihad properly.[42] His fears were justified since intrafamilial strife and, in particular, the rivalry between the rulers of the key cities of Cairo and Damascus often led to the forging of alliances across the religious divide. Just as Muslim leaders had done in the first decades of the twelfth century,[43] Ayyubid princes sometimes aligned themselves on the battlefield alongside Frankish rulers. In such a context it was hardly plausible to speak of raising jihad banners against the infidel.

Why did the actual Ayyubid jihad effort prove so lukewarm in reality? Various explanations can be given; an anti-climax after the conquest of Jerusalem in 582/1187 and the loss of the special focus for jihad which had been provided by the Holy City being in Crusader hands; a lack of resources to finance further military engagements; the fear of attracting more

crusades; and the desire on the Ayyubids' part to promote trade with the Franks. Indeed, it is true that through their holding back from engaging militarily with the Frankish states and their emphasis on entente and commercial considerations, the Ayyubids built up a prosperous Mediterranean trade between the Levant and Western Europe.[44] So, although it remains true that the Ayyubids were called *mujahid*s in the religio-political discourse of government and religious circles, their actions spoke louder than their words.

So much then for the broad outlines and general themes of Ayyubid history. It is now time to dwell in greater detail on issues directly related to the Ayyubids' custodianship of the Holy City and their attitudes to it.

Jerusalem under Muslim Rule until the Coming of the Crusaders

Rather than religious significance, it was strategic position, proximity to trade routes and accessible supplies, and other factors that dominated the choice of practical capital cities in medieval Islamic history. Indeed, Medina, the city of the Prophet, had enjoyed the status of the political capital of the Muslim community for barely twenty years before the Rightly Guided Caliph ʻAli moved the seat of the caliphate to Kufa in Iraq. Even more significantly, the first Umayyad caliph Muʻawiya, although he made the deliberate decision to be proclaimed caliph in Jerusalem as an important symbolic gesture of legitimisation, decided to stay in Damascus where he had long served as provincial governor since the days of the second caliph ʻUmar. And Damascus remained the capital city of the Umayyads for most of the duration of the dynasty. Their successors, the ʻAbbasids, based as they were in Iraq, built a new capital at Baghdad and they paid only passing or sporadic attention to distant Jerusalem. Likewise, the Fatimid caliphs opted to construct a city of their own, Cairo, as the capital of their vibrant new Shiʻite Ismaʻili state. In fact, it needed the arrival of Christian European invaders, the Franks, to provide a political and governmental role for Jerusalem when they made it the capital of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem.

Not surprisingly, Jerusalem in its medieval Muslim guise had fared best when strong local dynasties, such as the Umayyads in Damascus or the Fatimids in Cairo, had shown an interest in the religious character of the Holy City,[45] had adorned it with monuments and made religious visitations to it. Even under new Turkish Seljuq rule from the east, Jerusalem

was by all accounts a thriving centre for the Islamic religious sciences, and famous scholars such as al-Ghazali had resided there for a while in the 1090s.[46] Jerusalem was a popular staging-post in the pilgrimage route to and from Mecca. Pilgrims often stayed for a considerable while, enriching the city's religious life with their knowledge and bringing economic prosperity to the local shopkeepers and merchants. But this Muslim scholarly traffic to Jerusalem came to a halt under Crusader occupation.

Jerusalem Occupied by the Franks

During Crusader rule Jerusalem became a Christian city, 'where no Muslim or Jewish cult was permitted and no non-Christian could take up residence permanently'.[47] Mosques were turned into churches or used as secular buildings.[48] Despite the official position, however, there was a divide between rhetoric and reality, between regulations and economic interests, and there is evidence that on occasion both Muslims and Jews were allowed to enter the city to pray or for commercial reasons. It is well known that the famous autobiographer Usama b. Munqidh was allowed to pray in a small area of the Aqsa Mosque.[49] The Muslim scholar al-Harawi mentions that he had entered the Dome of the Rock on a visit to Jerusalem in 569/1173.[50] The Jewish traveller, Benjamin of Tudela, who went to the Holy Land in the 1160s, found some families of Jewish dyers living opposite the Tower of David.[51]

However, it is obvious that the third most holy city of Islam was deprived of its usual architectural and cultural patronage on the part of Muslim rulers and governors during the period of Crusader occupation. The climate was not right for endowing new monuments, or repairing or restoring existing ones, or indeed for Jerusalem to play a significant role as a centre of Muslim piety and learning. This situation would, of course, be transformed the moment Saladin re-conquered the Holy City.

Jerusalem in the Time of Saladin

> Saladin was the central pearl of that necklace.
>
> (Ibn Khallikan)[52]

Saladin came to the walls of Jerusalem having already acquired considerable credentials in the eyes of the Muslim Sunni world. Whilst in Cairo he had

sponsored the building of a number of religious monuments, although they were not directly attributed to him; as Ibn Khallikan writes, 'such secret conduct was unostentatious virtue'.[53] Ibn Jubayr also praises him openly for embracing the cause of Sunni Islam by sponsoring madrasas, Qur'an schools, a hospital and Sufi centres in Egypt, a country where Shi'ite monuments had predominated for two centuries.[54]

Saladin grew up in an environment in which Jerusalem, with its two sacred Muslim monuments – the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock – had been lost to the Muslims. But the memory of these two monuments never died. While working for Nur al-Din, Saladin imbibed the gradually increasing Sunni fervour concentrated on recapturing the Holy City for Islam. Not surprisingly, once this aim had been achieved, Saladin focused on the immediate re-consecration of the two Muslim sacred buildings in Jerusalem and on the removal of all traces of Crusader interference in these sites.[55]

Muslim teaching institutions were now necessary in Jerusalem and so Saladin gave orders that a madrasa for the Shafi'is and a residence for the Sufis should be built.[56] For the madrasa he designated the Church of St Anne, the mother of the Virgin Mary, and for the Sufi convent the House of the Patriarch near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, known to the Muslims as the Church of the Resurrection (Kanisat al-Qiyama). He placed libraries in the tower of the Aqsa Mosque. He sent for the beautiful minbar of wood, encrusted with ivory and ebony,[57] which had been commissioned by his illustrious predecessor Nur al-Din in 564/1168. Nur al-Din had planned for it to be placed in the Aqsa Mosque but he had been robbed by death of that opportunity. So the minbar had stayed in Aleppo until Saladin sent for it in 583/1187 and placed it in the Aqsa Mosque.[58]

It is clear therefore that Saladin did not leave Jerusalem immediately after re-conquering it. He stayed a while[59] and began the process of turning the city back into the third most holy city of Islam. As for the all-important function of *qadi* of Jerusalem, Saladin appointed a person from outside, his devoted adviser and biographer, Baha' al-Din b. Shaddad (d. 632/1234), a Shafi'ite scholar from Mosul. In this case, Saladin's choice for this key position was probably prompted by the urgent need to have a person of tried and tested loyalty and known intellectual gifts. So Saladin appointed him

in a number of roles – *qadi al-ʿaskar*, *qadi* of Jerusalem,[60] inspector of *waqf*s (pious endowments) and later the first instructor (*mudarris*) of the Salahiyya madrasa.[61] But the task of revitalising Jerusalem as a centre of Muslim learning and piety would not be accomplished quickly.

When Saladin made one of his periodic visits to Jerusalem in the autumn of 588/1192, he provided more financial help for the Salahiyya madrasa, founded for the teaching of ʿAsharite theology and Shafiʿite law,[62] and for the Sufi *ribat* in the house of the former patriarch.[63] He then gave orders that the church next to the residence of the Hospitallers in the street of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre should be made into a hospital.[64] Ibn Shaddad was ordered to stay in the Holy City to direct the building of the hospital and the completion of the Salahiyya.[65]

Saladin used *waqf*s as a major tool in reshaping the Islamic character of Jerusalem, converting Crusader lands and property into *waqf*s. Monuments, agricultural lands and other properties were taken from the Latin church to be used by the Muslim community.[66] The *waqf* of the Salahiyya madrasa in Jerusalem, established as a Shafiʿi madrasa, consisted of lands, gardens, baths, an oven, houses, a mill, springs, a church and shops.[67] For the Dome of the Rock he appointed an imam to whom he bequeathed a house, field and garden.[68] He also established a *waqf* in the area of the Mount of Olives to help two Kurdish holy men, both called al-Hakkari.[69]

It is clear, therefore, that in the immediate aftermath of the Muslim reentry into Jerusalem, Saladin paid great attention to the city and its welfare. It must be borne in mind that Jerusalem had been in Crusader hands for eighty-eight years. It had been made into a Crusader city. Several generations of Crusaders had lived there. Many more had come to visit the city on pilgrimage and to fight the infidel in the Holy Land. The intensely Christianised nature of the topography of Jerusalem under the Franks is clear from the descriptions of the city given by contemporary Crusader observers.[70] A letter from the Qadi al-Fadil, Saladin's famous scribe, confirms the degree to which the Franks had changed the face of the Holy City:

> They had rebuilt it with columns and slabs of marble. It was there that they had established their churches and the dwellings of the Templars and Hospitallers.[71]

It must be emphasised that Jerusalem could not be re-sanctified and refashioned as a Muslim city overnight. But Saladin did at least set in motion the process of transforming the visible signs of Crusader presence – their religious monuments – into Muslim ones. Such action not only testified to the world that Islam reigned again supreme in Jerusalem, but it was also a hoped-for invitation to Muslim religious figures – lawyers, scholars, Sufis – to return there and to make the city once more into a thriving centre of Islamic religious scholarship.[72] This process would, however, take time.

In 583/1187, new generations of the Muslim Jerusalem diaspora, the descendants of those who had survived the Crusader massacre of 492/1099 and moved to the security of Greater Syria, or even further afield, would need courage and determination, as well as the promise of economic security, to leave their present places of residence and return to face an uncertain future in the Jerusalem left so many years earlier by their grandfathers and great-grandfathers.

Jerusalem in the Time of al-ʻAdil (596–615/1200–18)

While al-ʻAdil ruled the Ayyubid territories, the process of rebuilding Islamic Jerusalem, both literally and metaphorically, continued steadily and impressively. Initially Jerusalem came under the jurisdiction of Saladin's eldest son, al-Afdal ʻAli, who was given Damascus as his capital city, with its dependencies, including Palestine. But he ruled for a mere three years (589–92/1193–6)[73] and the governors of Ayyubid Jerusalem changed thereafter with alarming frequency.[74] Despite his short rule to Jerusalem, however, al-Afdal established a madrasa for the Maliki *madhhab* – the Afdaliyya, also known as the Dome in the Quarter of the Maghariba; it was situated to the south-west of the *haram*.[75] Al-Afdal was a Maliki himself and he had studied Malikite *fiqh* in Egypt. He also had practical reasons for founding this monument since the part of the city in which it was built was selected as the place where the Maghribi troops in Saladin's army were to live. This new Malikite community in Jerusalem would gradually attract scholars to come from distant al-Andalus and the Maghrib to settle there.

After al-ʻAdil had gained overall control of the Ayyubid domains by 599/1202, his son al-Muʻazzam was given Syria. Al-Muʻazzam seems to have felt strongly committed to Jerusalem and at some point no later than

601/1204 it became his chief residence.[76] Thereafter the city enjoyed a greater measure of stability and growth until the coming of the Fifth Crusade.

A lengthy biography of al-Muʿazzam is given by his friend, the preacher and chronicler, Sibt b. al-Jawzi, who gives a list of his numerous building projects.[77] The author of a dynastic history of the Ayyubids, Ibn Wasil, is also at pains to emphasise the religious credentials of al-Muʿazzam. He reports that al-Muʿazzam frequented Muslim scholars and asked them about the finer points of the religious sciences. The prince, realising that the father of Ibn Wasil wanted to reside in Jerusalem, appointed him to teach in the Nasiriyya madrasa.[78]

Al-Muʿazzam established two madrasas. One of them, situated in the south-western corner of the *haram*, was appropriately called the Nahawiyya, since its role was to teach Arabic grammar. The second, established in 606/1209–10 and appropriately named the Muʿazzamiyya, was situated opposite the northern gate known as the Bab al-Duwaidariyya. It was Hanafite, in accordance with the devotion of al-Muʿazzam to that *madhhab*. As Ibn Khallikan records of him:

> He was the first of the Ayyubid family who professed the principles of the Hanafi sect; to this doctrine he displayed a devoted attachment.[79]

So, despite a general Ayyubid preference for the Shafiʿite *madhhab*, al-Muʿazzam was independent-minded enough to follow another path and to bequeath his Hanafite allegiance to his sons.[80]

Al-Muʿazzam is reported to have performed other good works, strengthening the defences of the pilgrimage route and supplying it with water. Other building projects of his included work in the Dome of the Rock, the Aqsa and the citadel.[81]

The dismantling of the walls of Jerusalem by al-Muʿazzam in 616/1219–20 was a momentous episode of Ayyubid history. It is a peculiar irony that al-Muʿazzam, the very Ayyubid ruler, who, with the exception of Saladin, seems to have cared most for Jerusalem and who actually lived there, should have performed this controversial action. The account of al-Maqrizi is as follows:

> This year (616/1219–20) al-Malik al-Muʿazzam ordered the dismantling of Jerusalem, fearing that the Franks would gain possession of it. The walls of

> the city and all the towers were razed, save the Tower of David, which lay to the west of the city. Al-Muʿazzam caused all the inhabitants to leave, only a very few remaining; and he removed all the weapons and engines of war in the city. The Muslims were thrown into great distress by the dismantling of Jerusalem and the loss of Damietta.[82]

When the decision to dismantle the fortifications in Jerusalem was taken, the brother of al-Muʿazzam, al-ʿAziz ʿUthman, was in charge of the city with the *ustadh al-dar*, ʿIzz al-Din Aybek. They were not in favour of this decision and tried to stop it, but in vain. Al-Muʿazzam insisted on going ahead with the destruction, arguing that it was dictated by sorrowful necessity. The dismantling of the walls began on 1 Muharram 616/19 March 1219.

The Crusader chronicler, Oliver of Paderborn (d. 1227), also gives a graphic account of this incident:

> In the year of grace 1219, Jerusalem, the queen of cities, which seemed impregnably fortified, was destroyed within and without by Coradin [that is, al-Muʿazzam], son of Saphadin [that is, al-ʿAdil). Its walls and towers were reduced to heaps of stone except for the temple of the Lord and the tower of David.[83]

The shock reaction in Muslim circles was very intense; some understood why this was done, others – such as Sibt b. al-Jawzi – were horrified:[84]

> Women and girls, young and old, young men, and children, all went to the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque, (and) tore their hair and clothes until the Rock and the *mihrab* of the Aqsa were filled with hair.[85]

Jerusalem in the Time of al-Kamil (615–35/1218–38)

> How heavily it weighs on us to see Jerusalem in ruins
> And the sun of its buildings going down and setting.[86]

a. The Events Leading up to the Treaty of Jaffa (626/1229)

It is important from the outset to underline certain key features of the rule of al-Kamil, the ʻmost skilful practitionerʼ of politics among the Ayyubid rulers.[87] Firstly, Egypt was always his main priority. His conduct, moreover, exhibited on many occasions a striking contrast between, on the one hand,

his aggressive stance towards his own relatives whom he wished to bend to his will and against whom he was ready to fight, and, on the other hand, his peaceful, pragmatic attitude towards the Franks.

When al-Kamil took over power in Egypt, it was a troubled moment for the Ayyubid state. The Fifth Crusade had begun to disembark at Acre in 614/1217 and was aiming for Egypt. His father al-ʿAdil had set out for Cairo and died during the journey on 16 Rabiʿ II 616/31 August 1218.[88] During this serious crisis, Ayyubid brotherly solidarity prevailed and finally saw off the Frankish threat with the securing of Damietta in 618/1221. Soon afterwards, however, a serious rift developed between al-Kamil and his brother al-Muʿazzam.

On a number of occasions at the time of the Fifth Crusade, al-Kamil proposed a treaty with the Franks in which he would regain Damietta in exchange for handing over substantial parts of the Holy Land to them. So desperate was he to protect his territories in Egypt that he was willing to hand over the key areas that Saladin had taken, and above all Jerusalem.[89] According to the eastern Christian historian, Bar Hebraeus (d. 1286), the Franks refused one such offer in 618/1221 and made further demands including one for 300,000 dinars 'in payment of the destruction of the walls of Jerusalem which al-Kamil had laid waste'.[90]

Muslim narratives of al-Kamil's various early overtures to the Franks are confirmed in the eyewitness account of the Fifth Crusade written by the Western chronicler, Oliver of Paderborn (d. 1227), the secretary of Cardinal Pelagius, the papal legate. Oliver mentions one such offer made by al-Kamil to the Franks whereby he proposed to 'give back the Holy Cross, with the Holy City' and he also promised 'funds to repair the walls of Jerusalem'.[91] Pelagius was to a large extent responsible for the rejection of the 'excellent terms offered by al-Kamil'.[92]

The 1220s saw important moves on the political chessboard. To the east the dynasty of the Khwarazmshahs, who were located in the fertile oasis area of the lower Oxus, had emerged as a strong power in the last decade of the twelfth century, ruling a state stretching from India to Anatolia, but after 617/1220 they had been displaced by the Mongols and moved ever further westwards.[93] The Khwarazmians were soon drawn into inter-Ayyubid conflicts. Indeed, already in 622/1225 al-Muʿazzam, out of fear that he

would be attacked by two of his brothers, al-Kamil and al-Ashraf, contacted the Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din and made an alliance with him, recognising his suzerainty.[94]

From the West came the news in 624/1227 that a new crusade was in the offing, involving as its leader Frederick II of Sicily.[95] Towards the end of that year, after relations with al-Muʿazzam had deteriorated further, al-Kamil, encamped at Tall ʿAjul, sent an embassy under the able negotiator, Fakhr al-Din b. Shaykh al-Shuyukh, to Frederick asking him to come to Syria and promising to give him Jerusalem and all Saladin's coastal possessions. These were the same terms he had offered Pelagius.[96] With Frederick's support, al-Kamil aimed to deal firmly with al-Muʿazzam, whilst the attractive terms he was offering Frederick would, he hoped, avert another crusade. Frederick made preparations for the journey on his 'bloodless crusade'[97] and arrived in Acre on 4 Shawwal 625/7 September 1228.[98]

After the death of al-Muʿazzam that same year – a most opportune event for al-Kamil – the latter captured Jerusalem. He now no longer needed the military support of Frederick but he found it difficult to extricate himself from the promises he had made to him. This point is underlined by al-Maqrizi who criticises al-Kamil, speaking of his 'involvement with the ruler of the Franks, his fear of him and inability to combat him'. For these reasons al-Kamil felt obliged to act in a conciliatory way towards Frederick.[99]

b. The Terms of the Treaty of Jaffa

The Treaty of Jaffa is probably the most controversial episode in Ayyubid history. It will therefore be discussed in some detail below. There is no complete version of the treaty in the Islamic or Crusader sources[100] but some at least of its alleged terms can be reconstructed from extracts in the Old French, Latin and Arabic texts.[101] There is general agreement in them on certain points, and differences of content and emphasis in other areas. On the Muslim side, the chronicle of Sibt b. al-Jawzi, who was a contemporary, is an important source, especially for recording the wider response to the surrender of Jerusalem to the Franks, but his work is heavily biased in favour of the Ayyubids of Damascus. Ibn Wasil, also a contemporary, has a more balanced approach to events. He does not hide his deep commitment to Jerusalem – his devotion is not only religious but also familial – but at the same time he does not rush

to condemn al-Kamil for handing over the Holy City. A third approach is that of the little-known chronicler, Ibn Abi'l-Damm (d. 641/1244), who is fiercely in favour of al-Kamil.[102]

The most appropriate text with which to begin, the source for most later Muslim and Eastern Christian Arabic accounts of the treaty,[103] is the work of Ibn Wasil.[104] Under his narrative of the year 626/1229,[105] Ibn Wasil states that Frederick refused to go home without being given Jerusalem and some of Saladin's conquests. According to his account, al-Kamil initially refused to agree to this condition. Eventually, however, it was established between the two of them that al-Kamil would hand over Jerusalem to Frederick on the condition that it would remain in a ruined state (*kharaban*), that he would not rebuild its walls and that the Franks should have nothing at all outside the city. Indeed, Jerusalem's dependent villages would belong to the Muslims. They would have a Muslim governor (*wali*) to rule over them; he would live in al-Bira, one of the dependencies of Jerusalem to the north. The Haram al-Sharif, with the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque, would remain in the hands of the Muslims, and their rites (*shi'ar*) would be visible there. The Franks should not enter the two Holy Places except for the purpose of visitation. The Franks would have certain prescribed villages on their route from Acre to Jerusalem.[106] Ibn Wasil does not specify how long the duration of the treaty was to be, saying simply that 'it was agreed for a specified term'.[107]

Ibn Wasil then moves away from what he has presented as clauses in the agreement to reflecting on al-Kamil's strategy here. He writes that al-Kamil realised that he needed to satisfy the emperor in full; otherwise, the door of fighting the Franks would open up for him and he would lose everything he had been trying to achieve. He thought it advisable therefore to satisfy the Franks with Jerusalem in a ruined state (*kharaban*)[108] and to make a truce for a while; later on he would be able to snatch it back from them whenever he wished.[109]

The evidence of a hitherto neglected Muslim source, the *Kitab al-shamarikh fi'l-tawarikh* of Ibn Abi'l-Damm (d. 641/1244), provides an interesting and counterbalancing perspective on the Treaty of Jaffa. Unlike the pro-Damascus chronicles discussed above, whose testimony is strongly hostile to the treaty, Ibn Abi'l-Damm has different loyalties. His work, apparently

written in the lifetime of al-Kamil, is dedicated to the Ayyubid ruler of Hama, al-Muzaffar II, a supporter of al-Kamil, and in it this chronicler justifies and praises the treaty, minimising the extent of the concessions ceded to Frederick by al-Kamil. Ibn Abi'l-Damm declares that the interests of the Muslims are served by the treaty which has been drawn up by al-Kamil, who is 'the shepherd of the Muhammadan community'.[110] This chronicler writes that 'al-Kamil made a full peace (*sulhan tamman*)' with the Franks and that the treaty was in the interest of the Muslims.

The approach of Ibn Abi'l-Damm is 'ecumenical':

> Jerusalem is a place of worship for Muslims, and the infidels too have a mighty belief concerning it . . . What people seek from Jerusalem is (the ability) to come and go on visits, to perform their worship according to the beliefs of either religion (*milla*).[111]

Ibn Abi'l-Damm stresses that al-Kamil agreed to hand over to the Franks only Jerusalem (*al-bayt al-muqaddas wahdahu*) but not any of its dependencies,[112] and his account does not mention the corridor granted to the Franks from Jerusalem to the coast. According to him, the Franks would not be allowed to build new houses or walls. In any case, the Franks are few in number, with no force, no arms and no equipment.[113] In his view, there would be significant benefits to the Muslims from the treaty, despite Jerusalem being in Frederick's hands. The Friday prayer, he says, will be performed 'for the Muslims living there', and Muslims (from outside the city) will be able to visit whenever they wish. He stresses the parlous condition of Jerusalem 'with its dilapidated state and its lack of fortification' and he points out the value of the treaty with its legally prescribed duration as guaranteeing security and preventing far greater ill befalling the Muslims.[114]

Ibn Abi'l-Damm ends on a note of bravado, declaring that when al-Kamil is ready, 'he will recover Jerusalem from the hand of the Franks who are there, in a single day, nay indeed a single hour'.

But despite this pious hope on the part of Ibn Abi'l-Damm, al-Kamil did not recapture Jerusalem in the remaining nine years of his life.

There is disagreement in both Crusader and Muslim sources as to whether the treaty allowed Frederick to re-fortify Jerusalem and to rebuild the walls. An important Crusader figure, Hermann of Salza, the Master of the Teutonic

Order, writes in a letter to Pope Gregory IX: ‘We are allowed through the treaty to rebuild Jerusalem in walls and towers according to the wish of the Christians.’[115] It would appear that Frederick even discussed the rebuilding of Jerusalem with local Crusader leaders and that some work was done to the walls but this task was never completed.[116] On the other hand, one of the continuators of William of Tyre – a source, it must be admitted, that is very hostile to Frederick – argues that ‘Frederick did not rebuild the churches of the holy places, nor did he strengthen the holy city’.[117]

Did Frederick rule an entirely Christian Jerusalem? On the Muslim side, the evidence is ambiguous. According to Ibn Wasil, al-Kamil sent orders to Jerusalem that the Muslims should ‘leave the city’ and ‘surrender it to the Franks,[118] but this same source does not say at this point in the narrative that the Muslims actually did leave the Holy City.[119] It would, however, seem unlikely that the Muslims did leave the city. Ibn Abi’l-Damm seems to suggest that despite Frederick gaining possession of the city, Muslims would continue to live there. The much later writer, the prolific al-Suyuti (d. 910/1505), gives interesting evidence on this point:

> When al-Kamil had given the Franks the Temple, they returned there and stayed there, the Muslims remaining too. For in every quarter where those were, these were also.[120]

Al-Suyuti reports elsewhere in his work that al-Kamil gave the Holy City with its destroyed walls to Frederick:

> This affair caused great grief to the Muslims, for the inhabitants of the Holy City were kept in the same town with the Franks.[121]

Perhaps al-Suyuti wishes to emphasise by this statement that there was continuous Muslim occupation of the Holy City from Saladin’s re-conquest until his own time. Quite apart from any pious motives al-Suyuti may have had – he was, after all, writing a work on the Merits of Jerusalem[122] – it makes good practical sense that what Muslims there were in Jerusalem stayed there. On the other hand, a letter from the Cairo Geniza dated 634/1236 notes that Muslims and Jews were not permitted to enter the city.[123] Another late source al-‘Ayni, on the other hand, states firmly: ‘Al-Kamil emptied Jerusalem of the Muslims and handed it to the Franks.’[124]

In his recent book the French scholar Richard poses the question whether Jerusalem became exclusively Christian after the signing of the treaty. He does not give an explicit answer to his own question, but his discussion seems to suggest that the Muslims stayed on. This does indeed appear to be likely.[125]

After all, the appointment of a Muslim *qadi* in Jerusalem, mentioned in the sources – his responsibilities would have been to deal with legal cases involving Muslims – would not have been necessary if there were no Muslims resident in the city. It is also very probable, given all the opprobrium heaped on al-Kamil after the treaty, that if the Muslims had really been driven out of Jerusalem, he would have been roundly blamed for that too. And there is no hint of that criticism being levelled at him in the Muslim sources.

What, therefore, should be inferred, from several references in the Arabic sources to the Muslims leaving the city after the treaty? It should be noted that, unlike on other occasions, when precise details are given as to where the Muslims fleeing Jerusalem went, such comments are not given in connection with the events following the Treaty of Jaffa. So it is probable that despite the proclamation mentioned by Ibn Wasil – 'When the truce had taken place, the sultan sent someone to announce in Jerusalem the departure of the Muslims and its being handed over to the Franks'[126] – this decree was never carried out.

c. Muslim and Crusader Reactions to the Treaty of Jaffa

The Treaty of Jaffa was generally greeted with widespread hostility, indignation and grief on the Muslim side.[127] In its immediate aftermath, al-Kamil was subjected to much reviling and criticism. Religious leaders protested outside his tent, making the call to prayer when it was not time for the prayer. Al-Kamil sent them away very forcefully.[128] But it was understandable that many Muslims, remembering Saladin's great triumphal entry into Jerusalem, should have experienced feelings of deep sorrow. The testimony of perhaps the greatest of all the medieval Muslim chroniclers, Ibn al-Athir (d. 630/1233), is particularly revealing in this respect. Overwhelmed as he is by the turbulent times in which he has recently lived and the horror of the first wave of Mongol conquests through Central Asia and Iran, he devotes many pages to this subject in the final volume of his *Universal History*, expatiating at length on the activities of the Khwarazmshahs and the Mongols. However,

his account of the surrender of Jerusalem is short and unadorned.[129] It is worth stressing that his version of the event comes right near the end of his massive twelve-volume work, which stops abruptly just two years later, at the beginning of 629/1231–2. He died soon afterwards.

The content of his account is very much the same as those of the other Muslim chroniclers of the time, but his text is at times quietly emotional and his distress breaks through his normally laconic style. Indeed, he includes two pious formulae, which express his ardent wish that the Holy City should be returned to the Muslims – 'May God return it (Jerusalem) to Islam soon'[130] and 'May God protect it and make it the House of Islam for ever'.[131] Unlike the two other Muslim chroniclers who wrote as contemporaries about the handing over of Jerusalem but who lived on to see its return to Muslim hands – Sibt b. al-Jawzi (d. 654/1257) and Ibn Wasil (d. 697/1298) – Ibn al-Athir died grieving for the Holy City, without the knowledge that it did in fact revert to Muslim rule definitively by 647/1250. His narrative ends with a prayer:

> May God give the Muslims the joy of conquering it and returning to it by His grace and beneficence. Amen.[132]

It was natural enough for religious circles in Damascus in the entourage of the new Ayyubid ruler there, al-Nasir Da'ud (whose father al-Mu'azzam had governed Jerusalem), to exploit the loss of the Holy City and rail against al-Kamil for his conduct. Ibn Wasil was present in Damascus on the day when his fellow-chronicler Sibt b. al-Jawzi, a scholar renowned for his eloquent preaching, was asked by al-Nasir Da'ud to give a sermon in the Friday mosque. In particular, al-Nasir Da'ud requested that Sibt b. al-Jawzi should mention the merits (*fada'il*) of Jerusalem.[133] The preacher duly performed the sermon:

> It was a memorable day. On that day, the cries, weeping and groaning of the people rose up.[134]

Sibt b. al-Jawzi himself records his own tear-jerking words:

> O shame on the Muslim rulers!
> At such an event tears fall,
> Hearts break with sighs.[135]

Yet, despite this full-scale invective, followed by outbursts of public emotion, which he has personally witnessed, Ibn Wasil does not shrink from his duty as a historian. He points out the political aspects of these carefully orchestrated demonstrations of grief, remarking that al-Nasir Da'ud aimed thereby 'to estrange the people from his uncle so that they would support him in fighting him (al-Kamil)'.[136] Ibn Wasil also takes the trouble to mention the widespread grief felt by the Muslims at what al-Kamil had done, expressing strong disapproval for what was seen as the undoing of what Saladin, the uncle of al-Kamil, had done in rescuing 'that noble city' from the infidels.[137] Despite these strong words, Ibn Wasil makes excuses for al-Kamil, emphasising that the sultan knew that the Franks would not be able to defend themselves in Jerusalem 'given the ruined state of its walls'. Later on, when the situation had stabilised, he would be able 'to purify it from the Franks and drive them from it'. Ibn Wasil puts into the mouth of al-Kamil the following words:

> Verily we are allowing them only churches and ruined houses, whilst the *haram* and what is on it – the Sacred Rock and other places of visitation – are in the hands of the Muslims.[138]

What of the Crusader reactions to the treaty? Despite the fact that Frederick had gained suzerainty over Jerusalem for ten years through the agreement he had made with al-Kamil, the news of this was greeted with strong disapproval by Crusader leaders. Gerold of Lausanne, in particular, no doubt enraged that he had been excluded from Frederick's negotiations with al-Kamil, wrote to Pope Gregory IX,[139] complaining that the Templum Domini (the Dome of the Rock) had not been included in the agreement.[140] Hermann of Salza, the Master of the Teutonic Order, also wrote to the Pope but in a somewhat more positive tone, saying that Muslims had been allowed onto the Temple esplanade to pray, just as Christians could do.[141] He also states that Frederick's men controlled the gates to the Temple esplanade[142] where Christians could still make offerings at the sacred rock. He downplays the Muslim presence, stating that only a few old, unarmed Muslim 'doctors' were permitted there.[143]

d. Frederick in Jerusalem

The treaty between al-Kamil and Frederick has been praised for a 'spirit of tolerance almost inconceivable of the thirteenth century'.[144] Other views rightly imply that this arrangement can be more appropriately described as a compromise device designed for the two rulers to extricate themselves from a difficult situation.[145] Once the truce was signed, it was human enough that both Muslim and Crusader sources would wish to present this treaty in the most glowing light for themselves and that they would try to downplay less favourable aspects of what had been agreed. Not surprisingly, the Muslim sources try to minimise the impact of surrendering the Holy City to Frederick and they suggest that he was motivated only by personal prestige in these negotiations. Indeed, Ibn Wasil says that he heard personally that Frederick had apologised to Fakhr al-Din for taking Jerusalem from al-Kamil, explaining that he had been compelled to make this move for reasons of maintaining his own prestige amongst his fellow Franks.[146] This stance on Frederick's part would presumably imply that he was not acting as part of a dangerous, wider Crusader initiative.

The Muslim sources also make it clear that Frederick had no intention of lingering in Jerusalem; Ibn Taghribirdi finds space in his very short account of this event to mention that the emperor only stayed in Jerusalem for two nights.[147] The Muslim sources emphasise – again perhaps in a spirit of apology for the surrender of Jerusalem to the Franks and attempting to save face – that Frederick is no ordinary Frank and that Jerusalem is in safe hands. Much prominence is given to Frederick's entry into Jerusalem. Even after the truce has been signed, it is interesting to note that, according to al-Maqrizi, Frederick 'sought leave to enter Jerusalem' from al-Kamil, who sent the *qadi* of Nablus to accompany the emperor around the Muslim holy sites.[148] Such a move would, of course, reassure the Muslim world that the Crusader ruler would behave appropriately in Muslim sacred space. In any case, as is well known, Frederick's long familiarity with Muslims in Sicily would have prepared him for such a visit. Indeed, he is shown in the Muslim sources as being highly deferential to Islam[149] and while in Jerusalem, he behaves well towards the inhabitants and 'he did not change the ceremonies of Islam in any way'.[150] He admires the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque, and

when a Christian cleric, with the *Injil* (Gospel) in his hand, tries to enter the Aqsa Mosque, Frederick sends him packing and says that if any Frank entered there without permission his eyes would be torn out. At that point al-Maqrizi puts the following statement into the mouth of the emperor:

> We are the *mamluk*s and servants of the sultan al-Malik al-Kamil. He has opened these churches to us out of favour; let no one of you overstep the limits set.[151]

Later on during the visit, the *qadi* of Nablus forbids the call to prayer while Frederick passes the night in Jerusalem. In the morning the emperor bemoans the fact the *mu'adhdhin* has not made the call to prayer. The *qadi* explains that he has taken this decision out of deference to the emperor. Frederick then responds:

> By God, my main desire in passing the night in Jerusalem was to hear the Muslims called to prayer.[152]

This convincing performance by Frederick, in which he plays the part of an admirer of Islamic culture, should, of course, be placed side by side with his activities back home where he dismantled Sicilian Islam and deported the Muslims in Apulia. It is also worth noting that, despite the extremely rosy picture of the emperor's visit presented in the Muslim sources, Ibn Wasil takes the trouble to mention that, whilst in the Aqsa Mosque, Frederick climbed the steps of the minbar, indeed, the phrasing of Ibn Wasil mentions precisely that Frederick 'climbed step by step to its top'. This is a detail the chronicler could have omitted if he wanted, especially as he seems to have wished to give a positive view of Frederick's conduct to his Muslim readers.

So what is behind this allusion? The minbar in general had long associations with the power of the ruler or governor who, standing on the second highest step, would preach the sermon and harangue the faithful. It had become customary not to use the top step, out of respect for the memory of the Prophet Muhammad who had stood on it, whilst the first caliph Abu Bakr had not done so. The minbar had also long been associated with divine authority and the power of the caliph, and it was the place where the ceremony of allegiance to the ruler was made.[153]

In the particular case of the Aqsa minbar, the memory of its close links with the days of Muslim glory under Nur al-Din and Saladin would resonate in the minds of those Muslims accompanying Frederick on his famous visit there. So his climbing the steps of this lofty minbar – of all minbars – can certainly be understood as a triumphal gesture on his part, reminding those around him as well as Western Christendom that it was now he who ruled the Holy City.

How else can this action of Frederick be interpreted? Was it a simple mistake committed in the heat of the moment when he stood in this sacred place and realised that he now ruled Jerusalem? Was it a deliberate attempt on his part to show disrespect to the Prophet Muhammad and to Islam? Or was it simply a spontaneous *coup de théâtre*? Given his deep familiarity with Islamic belief, acquired in Sicily, it would be surprising if he had not acted knowingly. And it would have been so easy for Ibn Wasil to gloss over this detail. In short, the means that Frederick chose to assert his new status as ruler of Jerusalem was not, as one might have expected, Christian, but deeply rooted in Muslim tradition.

Frederick achieved a bloodless conquest of Jerusalem, but it was an event which redounded little to his credit with the rest of Christendom. He was, after all, 'on the margins' of the Crusade and had been excommunicated in 624/1227.[154] As for the other side, as already mentioned, al-Kamil attracted great opprobrium from Muslim religious circles for the treaty he had concluded. Yet with the benefit of hindsight a more positive gloss can be put on this action of al-Kamil. As long ago as 1836, the translator of al-Suyuti, Reynolds, wrote as follows:

> Al-Kamil demolished the walls of Jerusalem – a wise and politic measure, for Jerusalem could not offer any important resistance to an invader; nor was it of much value from a political viewpoint. To maintain any effective garrison there would be a useless expense. By then ceding possession of the defenceless city to Frederick, al-Kamil deprived Western Christians of all pretext, on religious grounds, of invading his territory.[155]

Thus Saladin's inheritance was sacrificed to extreme political expediency. More positively, it can be argued that al-Kamil had kept hold of Muslim rights in Jerusalem and yet had yielded just enough concessions to put an

end to Frederick's Crusade. Militarily, the handing over of Jerusalem was meaningless,[156] and Jerusalem, once again in Crusader hands, remained just as vulnerable as ever to attacks from all-comers. And the next major invaders came out of the blue.

Jerusalem under the Rule of Najm al-Din Ayyub (637–47/1240–9)

The chronicler Ibn al-Furat (d. 807/1405) includes a long passage on Ayyubid Jerusalem in his *Universal History*.[157] This narrative lists in rather laconic fashion the many changes of government which Jerusalem had to endure in the sixty-three years of Ayyubid rule; the length of the list tells its own story. The years following the signing of the Treaty of Jaffa were turbulent in the extreme, especially for Jerusalem itself. The exact sequence of events surrounding the fate of Jerusalem is very confused, but it does seem clear that the city was the victim of frequent changes of overlord, both Ayyubid and Frank.[158]

It was during these years that the ominous presence of the Khwarazmians, with whom some of the Ayyubids had already made alliances, made itself felt.

From the time of the sudden appearance of the Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din in Anatolia in 626/1229, his troops had become a 'dominant fact of life' for the Ayyubids and some 12,000 of them stayed on in that region after the death of Jalal al-Din in 628/1231.[159] Before the death of his father al-Kamil in Rajab 635/March 1238, Najm al-Din Ayyub, his son and successor in Egypt, had been granted permission to enlist Khwarazmian troops.[160]

After the signing of the Treaty of Jaffa, Frankish occupation of Jerusalem remained very restricted but those who did settle there began rebuilding its defences, especially in the area where the Teutonic knights resided.[161] However, when the Ayyubid prince, al-Nasir Da'ud, attacked the city in 637/1239,[162] all Jerusalem had was a small garrison of troops in the Tower of David – the only defensive structure that al-Mu'azzam had left intact in 616/1219.[163] It was an easy task for al-Nasir Da'ud to capture the Tower of David and raze it to the ground,[164] 'despite the strength and size of its masonry'.[165]

The Crusaders re-acquired the still city briefly in the winter of 641/1243–4. On this occasion, the Syrian Ayyubids surrendered to the Franks a city only recently returned to Muslim ownership; the terms of the alliance are

described by Matthew Paris who mentions under the year 1244 that the sultan of Damascus promised to return to the Crusaders 'the whole of the Kingdom of Jerusalem' in return for their support against the sultan of Cairo. So, he continues, the Christians started to reside in the Holy City again, whilst their army stayed in Gaza with the troops of the sultan of Damascus.[166] This agreement even allowed Crusaders the right to celebrate Christian rituals once more in the two holy monuments, the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa. Matthew Paris reports that 'the holy city of Jerusalem is now inhabited by Christian people, all the Saracens being driven out'.[167]

Not quite all of them, however; as usual, the chronicler exaggerates. For Ibn Wasil confirms these Crusader reports, describing the situation he himself witnessed at that time in Jerusalem:

> I saw monks and priests in charge of the Rock and I saw bottles of wine for the ceremony of the Mass. I entered the Aqsa mosque and in it a bell was suspended.

He is deeply disturbed by these Christian practices, which he says have rendered Muslim prayer in the Holy sanctuary invalid.[168] However, the Franks were destined to hold the city for only a few months.[169]

As if the previous deals struck over Jerusalem were not enough, the Holy City was finally returned to Islamic rule in a way which was thoroughly discreditable to those Muslims who in Saladin's time had made such sacrifices to regain it. After a summons from Najm al-Din Ayyub, the Khwarazmians duly crossed the Euphrates, under the leadership of Husam al-Din Berke Khan and other commanders, and these troops created havoc wherever they went.[170] At the beginning of 642/early summer 1244, they moved south into Palestine and arrived outside Jerusalem on 3 Safar 642/11 July 1244.

When the Franks heard about the advance of the Khwarazmians, they fled from Jerusalem.[171] Of the 6,000 Christians who left the city in fear only 300 escaped the Khwarazmians who then entered the city 'which stood quite empty'.[172] The Khwarazmians attacked the garrison in the Tower of David which held out until 17 Rabi' I 642/23 August 1244 when it surrendered on the promise of safe conduct. The invading forces killed those Christians still in the city, not sparing any of them and taking their women and children into captivity.[173]

The devastation caused in the Holy City was terrible. Both Muslim and Christian chroniclers are ashamed at what has been perpetrated by the Khwarazmians, who were at least nominally Muslims. The Khwarazmians entered the church, termed by some Muslims, especially in Crusader times, as the Church of Refuse (*kanisat al-qumama*) – that is, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre – and destroyed the tomb which Christians believed to be that of the Messiah, removing the marble framework which enclosed the tomb and its carved columns.[174] They also massacred monks and nuns in the Armenian convent of St James, desecrated Christian tombs, including those of the Frankish kings that were in the church, and they burned the bones of the dead.

One of the continuators of the history of William of Tyre goes even further in describing the horror perpetrated by these implacable warriors:

> In the Church of the Sepulchre they found Christians who had refused to leave with the others. These they disembowelled before the Sepulchre of Our Lord, and they beheaded the priests who were vested and singing mass at the altars . . . They committed all kinds of acts of shame, filth and destruction against Jesus Christ and the holy places and Christendom.[175]

Like the Mongols, who allegedly deployed similar tactics, the Khwarazmians used deceit on some of the Christian inhabitants of Jerusalem who had fled to Joppa. They raised the Christian flag on the ramparts of the city, lured some of the Christians back and killed them at sword point.[176]

For Matthew Paris[177] rhetoric knows no bounds:

> Young men and virgins they hurried off with them into captivity, and retired into the holy city, where they cut the throats, as of sheep doomed to the slaughter, of the nuns, and of aged and infirm men.

The sultan of Egypt himself, Najm al-Din Ayyub, condemned the excesses of the Khwarazmians in the Holy Sepulchre in a letter dated to the end of Rabi‘ I 644/15 August 1246 and addressed to Pope Innocent IV. He said that what had happened there in the way of destruction and desecration had occurred without his knowledge or presence. It was ‘private armies that committed these bloody deeds’.[178]

Muslims at the time deeply deplored the terrible behaviour of the Khwarazmians and their leader, Berke Khan, in the Holy City. His own

family erected a mausoleum with a cenotaph in 643/1246 in Jerusalem (the building now known as the Khalidi Library) to commemorate his death. In an act of public contrition, this monument bears a most moving inscription in Arabic and Persian. It includes a profound cry for God's forgiveness for Berke's sins and it reminds humanity at large of the inevitability of God's judgement and justice. He who desecrates Jerusalem must come before God's judgement, in that very place where the Resurrection will take place.[179] At first sight it might seem surprising that this ferocious warrior, whose cruelty appalled his co-religionists, should have a mausoleum and a cenotaph bearing an elaborate inscription in his name in the very city which he had so savagely ravaged. However, it would appear that it was erected by the Ayyubids themselves who were related to him by marriage. When speaking of the occupant of this mausoleum, the wording of this inscription is spare and austere. There are no grandiose titles. The name Barakat (Berke) Khan speaks volumes. There is a melancholy pun here. Perhaps it was hoped that the proximity of the Muslim holy sites and the sanctity of Jerusalem would help this doomed soul to hope for the *baraka* which in his life he denied to Jerusalem, and for God's mercy, when the Day of Retribution comes.

By the time of Ibn al-Furat (d. 807/1405), however, the Khwarazmian sack of Jerusalem has been given a positive gloss:

> Thus they brought healing relief to the hearts of a believing people, may God Almighty give them the best of rewards on behalf of Islam and of its people.[180]

After the sack of Jerusalem, the Khwarazmians then made camp in Gaza and sent envoys to Najm al-Din Ayyub, offering to help him fight against the coalition of Isma'il and al-Malik al-Mansur, the lord of Hims. Najm al-Din accepted this offer.[181] The Khwarazmians were joined in Gaza by a large number of troops from Egypt under the command of the future Mamluk sultan Baybars.[182] That same year the infamous battle of Harbiyya (La Fourbie), as serious militarily as Hattin,[183] gave the victory to Najm al-Din Ayyub with his Khwarazmian allies over the troops of the Syrian Ayyubids and Crusaders.[184] This ill-fated collaboration of Syrian Ayyubids and Crusaders was strongly criticised by Sibt b. al-Jawzi who bemoaned the

fact that the Muslims had fought with crosses over their heads, and with Christian priests offering them the sacrament.[185]

After the battle of Harbiyya, a terrible disaster that accelerated the fall of the Ayyubid dynasty, Jerusalem was governed from Egypt. Ibn Taghribirdi says that Najm al-Din Ayyub planned to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and that he initiated this plan in a visit to the city in 644/1247. But it does not appear that this work was ever done.[186] Ayyubid pragmatism toward the Holy City lasted to the very end of their rule; in his testament, written in the Mirror for Princes tradition, Najm al-Din Ayyub, counsels his son, the last Ayyubid sultan of Egypt, as follows:

> If they (the Franks) demand the coast and Jerusalem from you, give them these places without delay on condition that they have no foothold in Egypt.[187]

The Religious Importance of Jerusalem in the Ayyubid Period

Perhaps inevitably – with Islamic Jerusalem humiliated, conquered and inaccessible during Crusader rule – the Muslims of the Levant had turned in the sixth/twelfth century to an alternative focus of piety and visitation: Damascus. Muslim visitors to the Holy Land had long included a visit to Damascus (mentioned in the Hadith as 'one of the best cities in Syria'). In particular, they would go to the Umayyad Mosque, built around the same time as the two Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem. By the time of the Second Crusade, which directed itself towards Damascus, the city was filling the gap left in Muslim hearts by the occupation of Jerusalem. The emotional atmosphere engendered by the Muslims' sturdy defence of Damascus in 542/1148 and the subsequent retreat of the Franks enhanced the glory of the city even further Nur al-Din, Saladin's great successor, embellished the religious status of the city by sponsoring the building of many religious monuments. The predilection of Nur al-Din for Damascus was shared by Saladin whose favourite city it was.

So the inaccessibility of Jerusalem as a centre of piety for eighty-eight years meant that it would take some time for it to become reinstated as a place of Muslim visitation, and especially of residence. A splendid beginning was made at the time of Saladin's triumphant entry into Jerusalem with

the sermon of Ibn Zaki in which all the major bases for the importance of Jerusalem for Muslims were described most eloquently.

However, the subsequent turbulence experienced by the city in Ayyubid times did not help matters at all. Jarrar argues that Jerusalem had always lingered in the hearts of the Muslims and that this memory was intensified by the *Fada'il al-Quds* literature.[188] Whilst this may well have been so, there seems little doubt that Muslims were slow to return to an unwalled and vulnerable Jerusalem in the Ayyubid period. The threat of further influxes of Crusaders hovered over the Holy City throughout the Ayyubid period and, although there are no records and accounts that prove this in precise detail, it is probable that the population of Jerusalem remained small and that Muslim re-settlement there must have been slow.

The urge for scholars to move across the Islamic world in search of knowledge and to perform the pilgrimage was, however, not completely halted by the political instability caused by the Crusaders and the Mongols.[189] And indeed there is evidence that some scholars and pilgrims passed through Jerusalem under Ayyubid rule. One example of such acts of piety was an Iraqi scholar, Makki al-Darir (d. 603/1207), who, according to Ibn Khallikan, went to Syria towards the end of his life to visit 'the holy temple of Jerusalem'.[190]

Following long Muslim tradition, going back to the Umayyad period, the two Ayyubid princes Najm al-Din Ayyub and al-Nasir Da'ud went to Jerusalem in 637/1240 to swear solemn oaths to each other in the Dome of the Rock. On that occasion al-Nasir Da'ud recognised Najm al-Din as supreme sultan of the Ayyubid empire.[191]

It has to be admitted that the Ayyubid rulers themselves tended to prefer to be buried in Damascus or Cairo.[192] However, the belief that Jerusalem was a very suitable place to die and in which to be buried continued to be widespread. This belief was reinforced by the *Merits of Jerusalem* books which often mention the special merit of dying and being buried in Jerusalem. In his work of this genre, Ibn al-Jawzi has a special section listing the great men who lived there and were buried there.[193]

The Ayyubid prince, al-Malik al-Auhad, was buried in a mausoleum in Jerusalem.[194] Another notable example of this custom was the ascetic Abu 'Abdallah al-Hashimi, a Spanish Muslim from Algeciras. In his biographical notice on this man Ibn Khallikan relates that Abu 'Abdallah went to

Jerusalem on a pilgrimage and stayed there until his death in 599/1203. The funeral prayer was said over him in the Aqsa Mosque. His tomb attracted pious visitors who sought favour from God through the merits of the holy man buried in Jerusalem.[195]

Ayyubid patronage of monuments has been studied in depth by Humphreys in connection with Damascus, which enjoyed a brilliant period of architectural patronage in the seventh/thirteenth century.[196] His research proves through detailed evidence that such patronage in Ayyubid Damascus was carried out by a tripartite elite – the ruling family, the military commanders and the religious establishment – with no single component dominating the others.[197] Even when control from the centre was weaker, for example immediately after the death of Saladin, many of the military commanders who had been given *iqta*'s acted freely and were de facto independent. Such figures often sponsored religious buildings and public works, such as irrigation systems, caravansarais, fortifications and mosques. The tripartite elite mentioned by Humphreys were also active in the first vibrant days of rebuilding the urban and religious fabric of Ayyubid Jerusalem.[198]

The Physical Condition of Jerusalem in Ayyubid Times

Throughout this chapter there have been frequent references to the walls of the Holy City. It is appropriate now to reflect more generally on this very important motif in the history of Ayyubid Jerusalem. It is a sorry tale. Ayyubid possession of the city even began, of course, with destroying some, at least, of its fortifications.

Saladin besieged the city along the northern wall, always the weakest part of the fortifications.[199] The siege began on 15 Rajab 583/20 September 1187. A few weeks later part of the walls was pierced and substantially damaged and this led to the surrender of the city.[200] Saladin began rebuilding the city walls between 1 Dhu'l-Hijja 587/December 1191 and Ramadan 588/October 1192.[201] He divided up the work amongst his sons, his brother al-ʿAdil, and his military commanders. Some, at least, of the work initiated by Saladin must have been done.[202] Otherwise there would not have been such an outcry about al-Muʿazzam dismantling the walls in 616/1219.

As already mentioned, one Crusader source states that in 637/1239, that is, after the Treaty of Jaffa had lapsed, many newly arrived Christians headed

for Jerusalem, 'which had no defences except the keep, known as the Tower of David'.[203] They began to fortify the city near St Stephen Gate and repaired some of the ramparts and turrets. But that same year, the Ayyubid prince, al-Nasir, destroyed what work the Franks had done and razed the Tower of David to the ground.[204] Jerusalem's defences seem to have remained in a ruined state thereafter. Indeed, when the Khwarazmians came, 'the ramparts were few and lacked any crenellation'.[205] Towards the end of 644/1247 Najm al-Din Ayyub ordered the walls of the city to be measured, intending to rebuild them, but this work was never finished, or perhaps never even started.[206]

All through the Ayyubid period, therefore, the Muslim sources make frequent reference to the walls of Jerusalem, to their being demolished or rebuilt. And it is possible to see the condition of the walls, both physically and psychologically, as a measure, indeed a symbol, of the state of health of the Holy City itself. Or to use another image, Jerusalem in the Ayyubid period was more often than not a house whose weak foundations showed in its walls.[207]

What of the state of the interior of the city? Muslim sources stress the peaceful nature of Saladin's entry into the city on 27 Rajab 583/2 October 1187 and this picture is reinforced to some extent by some of the Crusader sources. The thoroughly Christianised city must have looked very alien to the exultant Muslim troops, when they saw for themselves a plethora of churches, publicly displayed crosses, bell-towers, and other visible emblems of Christianity in such a small space. The sacred area of Jerusalem was extremely cramped.[208] Commenting on the layout of the interior of Jerusalem, Mujir al-Din (d. 927/1521) writes:

> The houses are so piled on top of each other that, if they were spaced out, as is the practice in most of the cities in the empire of Islam, the city would occupy twice as much space as it does at present.[209]

The major building initiative to Islamicise Jerusalem took place, broadly speaking, between 583/1187 and 615/1218. Within the newly conquered city, Saladin and some of his immediate descendants, concentrated, wherever they could, on converting existing Christian stone structures into Muslim ones. But not all the Crusader buildings would have been suitable for conversion

and so many of them would have been dismantled. Parts of them would be re-used as *spolia* and the remaining parts left lying where they were.[210] So it may be inferred from this that the cramped cityscape of Jerusalem would have been in a rather pitiful state, with dilapidated, half-ruined and destroyed Christian structures meeting the eye at every turn. Ibn Wasil often uses the word *kharab* (in ruins) to describe the state of Jerusalem in general, and not just its walls. How much of the ruined state of Jerusalem had been rebuilt before the dreadful onslaught in the city by the Khwarazmians in 642/1244 can never be known, but the upheaval caused by the rampaging Khwarazmians can only have exacerbated the tragically derelict appearance of the city. At times during the 1240s Jerusalem must have had the appearance of a 'ghost city'.

Christians and Jews in Ayyubid Jerusalem

a. The Christians

The complexity of 'Oriental Christendom' bewildered the Crusaders, described by Prawer as 'half a dozen communities divided by a common religion'.[211] In the various treaties made before the coming of the First Crusade for the Christians of Jerusalem – Melkites, Jacobites, Nestorians, Franks, Armenians and others – it was the Melkites who had control, however vague, over the community, its shrines, clergy and institutions.[212]

Saladin's conduct inside Jerusalem after his conquest of it is praised by both Muslims and Crusader chroniclers. He did not destroy the Church of the Holy Sepulchre nor did he convert it into a Muslim religious building.[213] During or just after the conquest Saladin, having, as usual, consulted with his advisers, decided that Christians would be allowed to visit the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and some other churches. According to one of the continuators of William of Tyre, this was for commercial reasons, as the Muslims did not want to lose the financial benefits brought to the city by Christians performing pilgrimage there.[214] Christians had to pay to enter the city once it was back under Muslim control. The entry fees totalled around 30,000 bezants or more a year. They were allowed to enter unobtrusively through the St Lazarus postern when visiting the Holy Sepulchre.[215]

In accordance with Islamic law, Saladin imposed the *jizya* on all Christians, numbering several thousands.[216] They were allowed to stay in the

Holy City and they bought the property of the departing Franks.[217] During the Ayyubid period, the three Monophysite communities in Jerusalem enjoyed a dominant position. This was partly due to Melkite loss of status in the city, but also to the absence of the Frankish hierarchy, although there were Frankish Christians there during Ayyubid rule from after Saladin's death onwards.[218] After the Treaty of Jaffa, the Latin patriarchs of Jerusalem did not move their seat from Acre back to Jerusalem; this was not only because of the vulnerable state of Jerusalem but also because of the presence of Greek patriarchs there.[219]

After Saladin's re-conquest, the Byzantine emperor Isaac Angelus, hoping to reinstate the situation as it had formerly been under Muslim rule, had entered into negotiations with Saladin which lasted several years after the battle of Hattin.[220] In particular, the emperor was keen to restore the Greek clergy to their pre-eminent position in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and at other shrines and to retain the right to nominate the patriarch in Jerusalem.[221] In the event, the Melkites were allowed to put some clergy in the Christian shrines in the Holy Land and to have some authority within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but the same rights were granted to Frankish clergy within the next few decades.[222] Moreover, the Fourth Crusade had serious effects on the rights of the Melkites in the Holy Land.[223] After the Muslim re-conquest there is evidence that Greek clerics and pilgrims came to the Holy Land and that certain indigenous Melkites, such as doctors, were in favour with the Ayyubid ruling family.[224] However, Rose concludes that the hopes cherished vis-à-vis Jerusalem after the Muslim re-conquest by the Byzantine emperors and patriarchs were not to be realised.

The Georgian Christians (who were Melkites) gained greater influence in the Ayyubid period. As a result of the energetic rule of Queen Tamara of Georgia (ruled 1184–1211) and also the presence of Georgian troops in the Ayyubid armies, Georgian pilgrims and money came into Jerusalem. The main Georgian building in the city was the Holy Cross Monastery outside the wall,[225] but in addition the Georgians constructed new hospices, churches and monasteries.[226] It is indicative of the favour in which the Georgian Christians were held that Saladin permitted them to officiate in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in 588/1192 before the Greek and Frankish clergy were allowed to do so.

The Armenian Christians in Jerusalem were quite numerous and after Saladin's repossession of the city they consolidated and extended their presence at the most important Christian monuments.[227]

New developments were initiated by Saladin. He showed favour to his Egyptian Christian subjects, the Copts, giving them privileges within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre that they had not enjoyed before as a group, and which distinguished them from their Syrian Monophysite religionists. Indeed, this newly found favour went further as both the Coptic and Ethiopian communities began to establish their own institutions in Jerusalem.[228]

So it may be concluded that in Ayyubid Jerusalem the Melkites did not succeed in taking over the dominant position formerly enjoyed by the Latin Church. The Georgians became the de facto leaders of the Melkite community for more than two centuries after Saladin's re-conquest. But all Christian groups were able to ask for privileges from their Ayyubid overlords on an equal footing.

b. The Jews

After Saladin's re-conquest of the city, the situation of the Jews improved and he allowed them to settle once more in Jerusalem.[229] Saladin is remembered by the Jews as a 'second Cyrus',[230] as a ruler who appealed to the Jews to settle in Jerusalem after his conquest of it. The famous Spanish-Jewish poet, Y'hudah al-Harizi, who visited Jerusalem in 613/1216, mentions a proclamation made by Saladin in 1189–90:

> And Saladin ordered to proclaim in every city, to let it be known to old and young: 'Speak ye to the heart of Jerusalem, let anybody who wants from the seed of Ephraim come to her.'

According to his testimony, there were three Jewish groups there – the Ascalonites, the Maghribi Jews and the French Jews.[231] These groups were never numerous.[232]

Concluding Remarks

History is rarely tidy. When writing about Jerusalem under Muslim rule, it would be easier to pass quickly, or even in silence, over the sixty-three years of

Ayyubid custodianship of the city. After all, this was a turbulent period which saw the Holy City have at least ten rulers. To finish on a climax of the fruition of the jihad of Saladin and his triumphal entry into Jerusalem is far more stirring than to tell the story of Ayyubid rule and the terrible vicissitudes that the city suffered at that time.[233]

Despite Saladin's increasingly single-minded determination, indeed obsession, vis-à-vis Jerusalem, there was never any question of his settling there. Indeed, the only period from the seventh century until the modern era when Jerusalem served as a political capital city was under the rule of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem. Like Mecca and Medina, Jerusalem had sacred rather than political importance for Muslims. Any military, diplomatic or commercial success which the Ayyubids may have had elsewhere in their realms brought little direct impact on Jerusalem.

The task facing the Ayyubids with Jerusalem was not that of a new Muslim dynasty taking over an important city from a defeated Muslim predecessor. It was much more daunting than that. Western Christian domination of the Holy City for eighty-eight years could not be eradicated quickly. Muslim religious traditions and a vibrant scholarly milieu could not be revivified in the twinkling of an eye. They would need considerable time to become embedded properly again. Of course, it is clear that Muslims had visited the Holy City under Crusader rule, but it is not clear in what numbers they came. The efforts of Saladin and his nephew al-Muʿazzam to re-develop Jerusalem as a religious centre set the process in motion, but such efforts were thwarted by political events after 616/1219. Stability in Jerusalem after that was a forlorn hope.

It should be borne in mind that the story of Ayyubid Jerusalem is not just one of disruption and bargaining over the ownership of the city. It is a saga of desperate survival tactics in a period of great external dangers, when the threat of more crusades from Europe did not recede and when the even more terrible spectre of the Mongol invasions loomed ominously on the horizon. Against this background individual Ayyubid princes occasionally could unite against a common foe. More often, what motivated them was sheer pragmatism, as they sought grimly to keep hold of their own territories in whatever way they could. Maintaining control of the Holy City was a secondary consideration in such a situation and its generally unhappy fate in

much of the Ayyubid period may rather be seen as a symbol of the widespread fragility of power, both Muslim and Crusader, in these troubled years.[234]

Notes

1. References in the footnotes to this chapter will use abbreviated forms of bibliographical titles, since there is a full bibliography provided.
2. The most appropriate moment from which to date the career of Saladin as an independent ruler would seem to be his seizure of power in Fatimid Egypt in 564/1169, although he was at that point still nominally acting in the name of his overlord Nur al-Din.
3. General historical surveys of the Ayyubid dynasty include Holt 1986 and Gibb 1969.
4. Humphreys 1977.
5. Eddé 1999.
6. The scholarly literature on Saladin is very extensive. The best biography in English remains the work of Lyons and Jackson 1982.
7. In this chapter the terms ‘Crusaders’ and ‘Franks’ will both be used.
8. The *Itinerarium* writes of the importance of Hattin as follows: ‘In a single moment it carried away and extinguished all the glory of the kingdom’; cf. Nicholson 1997, 35.
9. The author of the *Rothelin Continuation of William of Tyre* writes as follows about Saladin and the Ayyubids: ‘Saladin disinherited many people and conquered more lands than all the unbelieving Muslims who ever lived before him. All his life he succeeded in every thing he undertook, but as soon as he died his children lost nearly all of it.’ The same source goes on to describe how al-‘Adil (Saphadin) took all Saladin’s lands; cf. Shirley 1999, 33.
10. Al-Maqrizi gives the following assessment of al-‘Adil: ‘He did not see it wise to engage the enemy openly, preferring rather in his designs to use guile and deception. The Franks made peace with him on account of the strength of his resolution, his alert prudence, his capacious intellect, his resource in stratagems’; cf. al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 217.
11. Runciman 1955, 133.
12. For comments on al-‘Adil, cf. al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 170–1; Oliver of Paderborn 1948, 30–1. Al-Maqrizi writes that al-‘Adil fell ill on hearing that the Franks had captured the tower with chains at Damietta: ‘he sighed deeply and beat his chest in grief and sorrow, and was instantly seized with sickness’; cf. al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 167.

13. The 'Khwarazmian' troops were originally Kipchak Turks from Central Asia; cf. Holt 1986, 65.
14. For assessments of al-Kamil, cf. Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–71, iii, 240–4; al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 206.
15. The Crusaders called this the battle of La Fourbie.
16. Humphreys 1977, 1.
17. Humphreys 1977, 5.
18. Humphreys 1977, 9–10.
19. Cf. Lapidus 1988, 354.
20. However, because of Crusader perspectives, Hattin and Jerusalem are seen by the West as being the causes of his enduring prestige.
21. Saladin's Shafiʿite persuasion was very firm. In a little-known anecdote, the anonymous author of the *Bustan al-jami'* mentions that a Hanafi *faqih* called Ibn Abi'l-ʿAysh wrote a book in which he criticised the Shafiʿis. Saladin was very displeased; cf. Cahen 1937–8, 144; cf. Cook 2000, 147, and Madelung 1971, 157–61.
22. Lapidus 1988, 353.
23. Cf. Richards 2009.
24. Matthew Paris, tr. Giles 1852, 129–30.
25. Saladin was not averse to making alliances with Christian states. The Byzantines under first Andronicus and then Isaac Angelus and Saladin joined in opposition to the Latins in the Holy Land on the eve of the Third Crusade. An alliance was proposed to Saladin by Andronicus in 1185. Saladin sent religious scholars and a minbar to Constantinople and a sermon was preached before a crowd of Muslim merchants and travellers. The alliance with the Muslims from 1185 to 1192 was ultimately a failure and was to have serious repercussions, culminating in the Fourth Crusade of 1204; cf. Brand 1962, 167–81.
26. Cited by Sivan 1968, 116.
27. One of these two crosses, which was 'made of copper and coated with gold was buried beneath the threshold of the Bab al-nabi (in Baghdad) and thus trodden upon'; cf. al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 90.
28. Van Berchem 1922, 91–5.
29. This Qur'anic quotation, rarely used in monumental inscriptions – part of Sura 16: 53 – may be seen as a reference to God's special beneficence towards Saladin.
30. Van Berchem 1922, 91–2.
31. Cf. Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad, tr. Richards 2002, 72.

32. Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–71, ii, 638.
33. Ibn al-Jawzi, 1979.
34. For a detailed discussion of the format and content of this genre, cf. C. Hillenbrand 1999, 162–5.
35. Ibn al-Jawzi, 1979, 71–3, 84–7, 139.
36. For a discussion of the Ayyubids and jihad, cf. Sivan 1968, 131–64; C. Hillenbrand 1999, 204–24.
37. Ibn al-Nabih, 1881, 121.
38. Sibt b. al-Jawzi, 1951, 604.
39. Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–71, iii, 237.
40. Arberry, 1965, 122–5.
41. Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad, tr. Richards 2002, 4–5; C. Hillenbrand 1999, 204–11.
42. Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad, tr. Richards 2002, 4–5.
43. C. Hillenbrand 1999, 76–84; Sivan 1968, 24–8.
44. For Ayyubid trade, cf. Ashtor 1976; Heyd 1885.
45. For a recent discussion of this topic, cf. Mourad 2008.
46. Sivan almost certainly undervalued the sanctity of Jerusalem in the Muslim consciousness in the pre-Crusader period. He may have not done justice to the military efforts of the Fatimids and the Seljuqs of Syria who had to deal with an unfamiliar threat from a position of great weakness; cf. Humphreys 1998, 1.
47. Goitein and Grabar 1986; Prawer 1972 (ii), 54, 71.
48. Goitein and Grabar 1986.
49. Hitti 1987, 134–5.
50. Al-Harawi, tr. Sourdel-Thomine 1957, 63; C. Hillenbrand 1999, 317.
51. Prawer 1972 (ii), 239.
52. Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–71, iv, 479.
53. Ibn Khallikan, quoted in Winter 1991, 315–6.
54. Ibn Jubayr, tr. Broadhurst 1952, 33–5.
55. For a more detailed description of how Saladin re-consecrated Jerusalem as the third most holy city in Islam, cf. Jarrar 1998, 72; C. Hillenbrand 1999, 188–92.
56. Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–1871, iv, 547; al-Suyuti, tr. Reynolds 1836, 250–1.
57. Al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 85; Mujir al-Din, tr. Sauvaire 1876, 99.
58. For further discussion on the minbar, cf. Auld 2009; cf. also C. Hillenbrand 1999, 151–61.

59. Saladin left in 25 Sha'ban 583/30 October 1187 – that is, four weeks after his triumphant entry into the city; cf. Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–71, iv, 529.
60. Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–71, iv, 421.
61. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 142.
62. Jarrar 1998, 73.
63. Jarrar 1998, 73.
64. 'Imad al-Din, 1888, 443; Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–71, iv, 547.
65. Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–71, iv, 541.
66. Frenkel 1999, 5.
67. Frenkel 1999, 8, 10–11.
68. Frenkel 1999, 8, 10–11.
69. Mujir al-Din, tr. Sauvaire 1867, 141.
70. Shirley 1999, 13–17.
71. Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–71, iv, 526–7.
72. Jarrar writes most appositely in this connection that one of the most effective ways of asserting Islamic hegemony over Jerusalem after the departure of the Crusaders was 'to flood the city with Sunni monuments'; cf. Jarrar 1998, 71.
73. Humphreys 1977, 75.
74. Humphreys 1977, 108.
75. Mujir al-Din, tr. Sauvaire 1876, 162–3.
76. Humphreys 1977, 153, 145. The evidence – in the form of many inscriptions from the period 601/1204 to 614/1217, bearing his name – is very telling; Humphreys 1977, 150; Sharon 1977, 185.
77. Al-Mu'azzam was born in Cairo in 576/1180–1 but was raised in Damascus where he received good grounding in the Islamic sciences; Sibt b. al-Jawzi, 1951, 644–50; cf. also al-Makin Ibn al-'Amid, trs Eddé and Micheau 1994, 39.
78. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 141; cf. also Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–71, ii, 429.
79. Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–71, ii, 428.
80. Jarrar 1998, 73. For a discussion of the way in which al-Mu'azzam treated the Hanbalites, cf. Cook 2000, 9, n. 80; Madelung 1971, 160, n. 132.
81. The epigraphical evidence for these activities is listed by Sharon 1977, 185–6. For an extremely thorough survey of the monuments sponsored by al-Mu'azzam, cf. Jarrar 1998, 73–4.
82. Al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 181; cf. also al-Nuwayri 1992, xxix, 93.
83. Oliver of Paderborn 1948, 36–7.
84. Sibt b. al-Jawzi, 1951, viii/2, 601.

85. Tearing out hair is an expression of extreme grief which goes far back in the cultures of the Near East; cf. Isaiah, 15: 2; Goldziher 1968, 151–4.
86. Verses by an anonymous poet quoted by al-'Ayni in his account of the handing over of Jerusalem to Frederick by al-Kamil; cf. al-'Ayni 1887, 190.
87. Holt 1986 64.
88. Humphreys 1977, 156.
89. Humphreys 1977, 169.
90. Bar Hebraeus 1932, 379.
91. Oliver of Paderborn 1948, 45.
92. Holt 1986, 63; Van Cleve 1969, 409–10; Little 1989, 183.
93. Cf. Bosworth 1968, 201–2.
94. Al-'Ayni 1887, 183; Humphreys 1977, 176.
95. For a clear picture of Frederick's crusade, cf. Richard 1999, 307–18.
96. Holt 1986, 64.
97. A phrase used by Gabrieli 1969, 267.
98. For accounts of these events, cf. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 206–7, 234; al-'Ayni 1887, 183; al-Nuwayri 1992, xxix, 149–52.
99. Al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 206.
100. For general discussions on the treaty, cf. Van Cleve 1969, 448–62; Richard 1999, 315–18.
101. Van Cleve says that there are 'occasional references, with differing emphases, in both Arabic and Christian sources'; Van Cleve 1969, 455. This is certainly not the case for the works of Ibn Wasil and Ibn Abi'l-Damm, both of whom write at length about the treaty, as discussed below.
102. For an invaluable analysis of this chronicle, together with an edition and translation of relevant sections of the text, cf. Richards 1993, 183–200. Gibb mentions this source briefly: cf. Gibb 1969, 702, n. 12.
103. The account of the treaty given by al-Maqrizi, for example, follows Ibn Wasil very closely: al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 206–7.
104. For an analysis of the manuscripts of the text of Ibn Wasil, cf. the editors' comments in Ibn Wasil, 1972, iv, 8–13 and Jackson 2007, 5, n. 22. Jackson discusses the relationship between the two Paris manuscripts, BN mss arabes 1702 and 1703. He points out that it is BN ms arabe 1703 that is 'apparently a copy of Ibn Wasil's original text' whilst BN ms arabe 1702 is 'a reworking of Ibn Wasil's history by his continuator, Ibn 'Abd al-Rahim. A full French translation of the text of Ibn Wasil, as edited by Rabi' and 'Ashur, about the treaty is given in Guichard and Menjot 2000, 238–9.

105. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 214–53.
106. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 241–2.
107. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 243.
108. Costello's English translation of Gabrieli's Italian translation of the Arabic word *kharab* as 'disarmed' is not satisfactory; cf. Gabrieli 1969, 270.
109. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 242. Extra details about the treaty, such as the length of its duration, are also given in a range of other Arabic sources. According to al-Maqrizi, the agreement was to last for ten years, five months and forty days, starting from Sunday 28 Rabi' I 626/24 February 1229; cf. al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 207.
110. Richards 1993, 188, 195. This image is a long-lived one in the Islamic epistolary tradition.
111. Richards 1993, 188, 196.
112. Richards 1993, 188, 196.
113. Richards 1993, 188, 196.
114. Richards 1993, 188, 196.
115. *Licet etiam nobis per pactum reedificare Jerusalem in muris et turribus juxta voluntatem christianorum*; cf. Huillard-Bréholles 1852–60, iii, 92.
116. Richard 1999, 318.
117. Shirley 1999, 37.
118. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 242; cf. also al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 207.
119. This discussion is following the printed edition of Ibn Wasil by Rabi' and 'Ashur; this is based on readings from three manuscripts. However, Gabrieli's translation of the passage about the treaty includes the sentence: 'The Muslims left amid groans and lamentations'; cf. Gabrieli 1969, 270.
120. Al-Suyuti, tr. Reynolds 1836, 505–6.
121. Al-Suyuti, tr. Reynolds 1836, 270–1.
122. Al-Suyuti mentions other *fada'il* works on which he has drawn, including those of Ibn al-Jauzi and Ibn 'Asakir; al-Suyuti, tr. Reynolds 1836, xv–xvi.
123. Goitein 1986, 331, cited by Hawari in Chapter 12, n. 28.
124. Al-'Ayni 1887, 186.
125. Richard 1999, 318.
126. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 243.
127. Sivan 1968, 147–9; Humphreys 1977, 202, 448, n. 18.
128. He confiscated 'the screens and silver candlesticks and other instruments that they had brought with them'; cf. al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 207.
129. Ibn al-Athir 1857–76, xii, 313–5.

130. Ibn al-Athir 1857–76, xii, 314.
131. Ibn al-Athir 1857–76, xii, 313.
132. Ibn al-Athir 1857–76, xii, 315.
133. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 245.
134. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 246.
135. Gabrieli 1969, 274.
136. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 245.
137. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 243.
138. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 243.
139. For a copy of his letter to the Pope, cf. Huillard-Bréholles 1852–60, iii, 102–6.
140. Another Crusader source indicates that Frederick had asked for the *Templum Domini* to be surrendered but al-Kamil had refused to agree to this; cf. *L'estoire de Eracles empereur*, *RHC, Occ.*, 370–1, 374.
141. Huillard-Bréholles 1852–60, iii, 91–2.
142. Huillard-Bréholles 1852–60, iii, 101.
143. *pauci sacerdotes eorum senes et sine armis*; cf. Huillard-Bréholles 1852–60, iii, 101.
144. Van Cleve 1969, 455.
145. Richard 1999, 316–7.
146. Ibn Wasil 1972, iv, 242.
147. Ibn Taghribirdi 1936–8, 00, 272.
148. Al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 207.
149. Richard 1999, 316.
150. Ibn Taghribirdi, 1936–8, vi, 272.
151. Al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 207.
152. Al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 207–8; cf. also al-'Ayni 1887, 193.
153. Becker 1924, 450–71.
154. Richard 1999, 308.
155. Al-Suyuti, tr. Reynolds 1836, 505–6.
156. Humphreys 1977, 203.
157. Ibn al-Furat states that he has borrowed from an earlier work by the Aleppan geographer 'Izz al-Din Ibn Shaddad (d. 684/1285); cf. Ibn al-Furat, tr. Lyons 1971, 61–3.
158. Jackson discusses in detail the background to this volatile period; cf. Jackson 1987.
159. Humphreys 1977, 216.
160. Humphreys 1977, 233, 238. The Crusader chronicler Matthew Paris castigates

the Khwarazmians (Choermians) who were diverted from Egypt by the sultan and who advised them to attack Jerusalem, whetting their appetite for spoil and lands; thereafter he would give them his patronage. Their attack on Jerusalem is described in graphic detail by the same source; cf. Matthew Paris, tr. Giles 1852, I, 498–500.

161. Richard 1999, 319.
162. According to Ibn al-Furat, the attack began on 17 Jumada I637/15 December 1239 and the city surrendered on 8 Jumada II 637/5 January 1240; cf. Ibn al-Furat, tr. Lyons, 1971, 62; cf. also al-'Ayni 1887, 196.
163. Jerusalem 'had no defences except the keep, known as the Tower of David'; cf. Shirley 1999, 40.
164. Shirley 1999, 40; cf. also Richard 1999, 323; Humphreys 1977, 261; Jackson 1987, 39; Runciman 1955, 219.
165. Shirley 1999, 40; al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 251.
166. Matthew Paris, tr. Giles 1852, I, 497.
167. Matthew Paris, tr. Giles 1852, I, 483.
168. Ibn Wasil 1972, v, 333; Ibn al-Furat, tr. Lyons 1971, 1–2.
169. Humphreys 1977, 274–5.
170. Ibn Wasil 1972, v, 336.
171. Ibn Wasil 1972, v, 337; al-'Ayni 1887, 197.
172. Shirley 1999, 64.
173. Ibn Wasil 1972, v, 337; al-'Ayni 1887, 198.
174. Shirley 1999, 64.
175. Shirley 1999, 64.
176. Matthew Paris, tr. Giles 1852, 496–7.
177. Matthew Paris, tr. Giles 1852, 498–500. This section provides a much more detailed account of what has been mentioned in summary earlier in his book.
178. Cf. Lupprian 1981, 173–5, quoted in Guichard and Menjot 2000, 254–5.
179. Cf. C. Hillenbrand 2004, 287.
180. Ibn al-Furat, tr. Lyons 1971, 3.
181. Ibn Wasil 1972, v, 337.
182. Mujir al-Din, tr. Sauvaire 1876, 90.
183. The battle ended the 'patient reconstruction of the Latin kingdom'; cf. Richard 1999, 330; cf. also Jackson 1987, 32.
184. For a detailed account of the battle, cf. Shirley 1999, 132–4.
185. Sibt b. al-Jawzi, 1951, viii/2, 746; C. Hillenbrand 1999, 222.
186. Ibn Taghribirdi, 1936–8, vi, 359.

187. Cahen and Chabbouh 1977, 100; C. Hillenbrand 1999, 222.
188. Jarrar 1998, 71.
189. Tibawi has a rather too optimistic view of the resilience of the Muslim tradition of scholarly travel; cf. Tibawi 1978, 9.
190. Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–71, iii, 436.
191. Humphreys 1977, 263.
192. Saladin was buried in Damascus. So too was al-ʻAdil, who had a tomb built for himself there; Bar Hebraeus 1932, 378.
193. Ibn al-Jawzi 1979, 129.
194. Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–71, iii, 79.
195. Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane 1843–71, iii, 23.
196. Humphreys 1989, 151–74.
197. Humphreys 1989, 155.
198. Cf. Korn 2004, 71–90. This topic is dealt with at length by other scholars whose contributions appear in this book – Hawari, Blair, R. Hillenbrand, Jartar and Korn. It will therefore not be discussed in any further detail here.
199. Prawer 1969, 672.
200. When Saladin took Jerusalem, he 'flattened no small part of the wall'; cf. Nicholson 1997, 199, 38.
201. ʻImad al-Din 1888, 400–1, 416–19.
202. Bar Hebracus mentions that in 1192 Saladin heard that the Franks were planning to attack Jerusalem, so he sent for troops and 'strengthened the walls of Jerusalem'; Bar Hebraeus 1932, 339. Cf. also Hawari herein, Chapter 12 notes 193 and 197.
203. Shirley 1999, 40.
204. Shirley 1999, 40; al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 251.
205. Shirley 1999, 63.
206. Ibn Taghribirdi 1936–8, vi, 359.
207. For a wider discussion of the significance of walls, cf. O'Meara 2007, 49.
208. The city would have had far more churches and other Christian buildings per square mile than anywhere else back home in Western Europe.
209. Mujir al-Din, tr. Sauvaire 1876, 170–1.
210. Cf. Flood 2009.
211. Prawer 1972, 215.
212. Rose 1992, 239.
213. Al-Maqrizi mentions that 'a fee was determined for those of the Franks who should visit it'; cf. al-Maqrizi, tr. Broadhurst 1980, 85. One Eastern Christian

source attributes the sparing of the church by the Muslims 'not out of respect for its sanctity, but because of their greedy desire to lay hands on the gifts the people brought upon visiting it'; cf. *The Chronicle of the Anonymous Edessan*, cited in Moosa 2003, 271.

214. Shirley 1999, 37.
215. Shirley 1999, 18–19. However, this source mentions that the Pope issued a general sentence of excommunication on anyone who gave Muslims payment for performing pilgrimage.
216. Ashtor-Strauss 1956, 325.
217. Ashtor-Strauss 1956, 325.
218. For relations between the Ayyubids and the Frankish Christians, cf. Humphreys 1977, 108, 134, 136, 266, 269, 274; Jackson 1987, 32–8, 49–55.
219. Rose remarks somewhat vaguely that after 1229 Jerusalem 'was fairly secure for a decade'; Rose 1992, 247. However, this is not very likely to have been the case.
220. Rose 1992, 239.
221. For example Gethsemane, Mary's tomb and St Lazarus; cf. Rose 1992, 240.
222. Rose 1992, 240.
223. Rose 1992, 180–5
224. For sources, cf. Rose 1992, 240–1.
225. Prawer 1972 (ii), 230
226. Rose 1992, 243.
227. Their major sanctuary was St James in the Street of the Armenians, between the Tower of David and the Zion Gate; cf. Prawer 1972 (ii), 230.
228. Rose 1992, 245; Prawer 1972 (ii), 228.
229. Ashtor-Strauss 1956, 324. Ashtor-Strauss poses the question 'How tolerant was Saladin?' He points out that Saladin disliked freethinkers and heretics and that he was a pious Muslim. He goes on to discuss the differences between Fatimid and Ayyubid attitudes towards their non-Muslim subjects, underlining that the Fatimids displayed greater tolerance than their successors in Egypt.
230. Prawer 1972, 245.
231. Prawer 1972 244–5; Ashtor-Strauss 1976, 326. The Geniza documents prove that Ayyubid rule must have had a reputation for orderly government able to guarantee the safety of foreigners. These documents speak of the influx of learned Jews from France.
232. Benjamin of Tudela, for example, found four Jewish families in Jerusalem; Ashtor-Strauss 1956, 324.

233. Understandably this approach has often been preferred in the rhetoric of anti-Crusading modern Arab and Iranian political discourse about Jerusalem.
234. Under the Mamluks, as Little observes: 'For the first time since the reign of Salah al-Din, it (Jerusalem) was to remain firmly in the hands of Muslims, no longer to be offered as a prize in the hands of Muslims, no longer to be offered in political, military and diplomatic contests'; cf. Little 1989, 186.

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13

Jihad Poetry in the Age of the Crusades

Introductory Comments

Medieval Arabic poetry, spanning the period from around 500 to 1800, has rarely found favour with Westerners. It has been criticised for its lack of 'spontaneity', the absence in it of the personal note, its emphasis on form over content, and its excessive indulgence in verbal pyrotechnics – antithesis, synonyms, puns and other devices – not to mention its self-consciously inkhorn vocabulary. Indeed, the extraordinarily rich vocabulary of classical Arabic – with literally hundreds of words denoting, for example, the camel, the camel's trappings and the beauties of the desert – does not lend itself easily to translation into other languages. The frustrated and impotent translator ends up with a prose version, which is workmanlike, but flat and lifeless, in comparison with the resonance and force of the original.

In the period before Islam, poetry recited orally within the tribe was the vehicle for recording the genealogies of the ancient Arabs and for lauding their heroic exploits. After the advent of Islam, and the creation of a vast world empire, caliphs and governors encouraged court poets to compose panegyrics to vaunt their regimes and their personal prestige. Nobody thought that the writing of verse was easy; poetry was recalcitrant material, to be tamed only by painful and prolonged effort. The words had to be fashioned by constant arrangement and rearrangement. Rarely are medieval Arab poets found boasting of their ability to compose verse quickly. Poems had to be meticulously crafted. Nevertheless, inspiration and natural talent were indispensable; no amount of effort could succeed without an innate disposition towards poetry.[1]

The Concept of Jihad and its Manifestation in Poetry before the Coming of the Crusades

Jihad is enjoined on the believer several times in the Qur'an and indeed has sometimes been called the sixth pillar of Islam. From the earliest period, the notion of jihad (struggle) as a spiritual concept for individual Muslims was paramount. Two kinds of jihad were identified, however: the greater jihad and the lesser jihad. The greater jihad is the struggle which man has to wage against his lower self and is, indeed, more meritorious than the lesser jihad, the military struggle conducted against infidels, either to defend or to expand the world of Islam.[2]

The conflict of the Crusades did not create the first jihad poetry in Arabic. The pre-Islamic poetic tradition with its weapons of glorification of the tribe and satire of the enemy could be used to extol the new faith and castigate polytheists and infidels. The 'Abbasid poet Abu Tammam (*fl. c.* 805–45) laid a number of the foundations for later jihad poetry in his praise of the annual campaigns against the Byzantines led by the caliph al-Muʿtasim in the ninth century, and in particular the Muslim victory at the battle of Amorium in 836: the poem is a literary tour de force, with every line ending in the letter 'b':

> O day of the battle of 'Ammuriyya, hopes have returned from you
> overflowing with honey-sweet milk.
> You have left the fortunes of the sons of Islam in the ascendant, and the
> polytheists and the abode of polytheism in decline.[3]

Thus we see a single Muslim military triumph being elevated to the status of a grandiose struggle between Islam and polytheism.

The favourite classical Arabic poet of all time is the Syrian al-Mutanabbi (d. 965), a professional panegyrist who travelled with his poetic wares in search of patronage.[4] The religious flavour of his name – al-Mutanabbi – meaning 'he who aspires to be a prophet' – indicates some politico-religious activities in his youth which caused him to end up in prison for a while. Later, he spent nine years in the service of an Arab prince, the remarkable Hamdanid ruler of Aleppo, Sayf al-Dawla, who fought more than forty battles against the Byzantines. Bedridden from 962 onwards, Sayf al-Dawla

would be carried into battle on a litter and when he died, he was buried in his mausoleum, in the manner of a martyr, with a brick covered in dust from one of his campaigns placed under his cheek. He was a real model for later jihad warriors to follow. The period he spent with Sayf al-Dawla brought al-Mutanabbi the most satisfaction and it was then that he produced his finest poetry, excelling in the description of fierce combat, often put into the mouth of the warrior himself:

> Now I face war and I will go to the end.
> I will leave horses startled by the burning battle.
> They are so pierced with blows, so panic-stricken by shouting,
> That they seem to be afflicted by a kind of madness . . .
> More delicious than the generous wine,
> More gentle than the clinking of goblets
> Are for me the handling of sabres and lances
> And the impact, at my command, of one army against another.
> To expose myself to death, in combat, is my life.
> For me living is spreading death . . .
> I have exhausted the utmost measure of patience. I will
> Now hurl myself into the perils of war . . .
> Tomorrow is the rendezvous between slender blades.[5]

The capture by Sayf al-Dawla of the Byzantine border fortress of al-Hadath in 954 gives al-Mutanabbi the opportunity to conjure up a most memorable poetic tour de force, replete with rhetorical devices and powerful images:

> According to the degree of the people of resolve come resolutions, And
> according to the degree of noble men come noble actions.
> Small deeds are great in the eyes of the small
> And great deeds are small in the eyes of the great.[6]

Here we see the rigidly symmetrical antitheses so beloved of classical Arab poets. But we see and hear more than this – the hypnotic rhythmic succession of a torrent of words which sound similar – paronomasia – and which fit together in ways that defy easy definition. The jihad evoked in the poetry of al-Mutanabbi is not limited to his master's campaigns; it is viewed on a much wider canvas:

You were not a king routing an equal,
But monotheism routing polytheism,
We put our hope in you and your refuge, Islam.
Why should merciful God not guard it, when through you
He cleaves the unbeliever asunder?

Al-Nami, a much lesser-known poet than al-Mutanabbi, who held public poetry competitions with his great rival, also gives fulsome praise to his patron Sayf al-Dawla, and he hints at the link between jihad and martyrdom, should his master fall on the field of battle in the path of jihad:[7]

Illustrious prince! Your lances gain you glory in this world and in Paradise thereafter.
Every year which passes finds you with your sword in the necks of enemies
And your steed harnessed with bit and saddle.
Time rolls on, and still your deeds are all for glory.

But such jihad campaigns as those of Sayf al-Dawla on the Byzantine border, and those of others on the Central Asian steppes against the pagan Turks or in Muslim Spain against the Christians of the north, should not blind us to the prevailing context of the Muslim world before the coming of the Crusades. The predominant ethos, after the initial Arab conquests of the seventh century, was *not* one of jihad; it was rather one of fairly fixed frontiers and of generally pragmatic tolerance of Christians and Jews. An intensifying of the Muslim jihad spirit was to return as a result of the coming of the Crusaders.

An Overview and Analysis of Jihad Poetry Written during the Muslim/Crusader Conflict

The body of poetry about jihad that has survived from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is quite substantial. It is therefore somewhat surprising that such poetry has not been discussed, either under the category of religious or political poetry, in any of the standard works of scholarship on classical Arabic literature. Take the example of Saladin's famous friend and biographer, 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani (d. 1201), whose historical works, written in a formidably difficult ornate prose, are frequently mentioned in

surveys of Arabic literature, usually as models to be avoided.[8] But his poetry is almost totally ignored, despite its value as a background to Saladin's career. And this neglect extends to the whole corpus of jihad poetry, which is scattered through Muslim chronicles, biographical dictionaries and medieval anthologies.

It is well known that when the forces of the First Crusade hit the Muslim world in 1098, the spirit of jihad was far from being in the forefront of Muslim minds and that it was a good half-century before the inhabitants in Syria and Palestine were able to forget their political and religious squabbles sufficiently to reunite under strong leadership and the banner of revitalised jihad. The prospect of Jerusalem lost to the Crusaders would provide an intense spur to the Muslims in their struggle. In a period almost totally devoid of contemporary Muslim chronicles, the poetry which has survived from the early twelfth century provides valuable testimony to the Muslim experience of grief and anguish at the loss of Jerusalem and to the gradual reawakening of the jihad spirit. These poems, composed by poets such as al-Abiwardi and Ibn al-Khayyat,[9] reflect the anguish and shame of loss.[10] The Franks are portrayed as religious infidels and despoilers of all that the Muslims hold sacred, both in the public domain and in their homes, since the sanctity of their mosques and their women is endangered. Sadly for the Muslims, the warnings contained in these poems remained unheeded for several decades, but their themes would be adopted and elaborated by poets later in the twelfth century and thereafter.

The great Muslim leader who began to turn the tide significantly in the fight against the Franks, Nur al-Din (d. 1174), is often portrayed as the very prototype of the jihad warrior. Ideally, personal and public jihad combine in the person of the ruler and this is certainly the way in which Nur al-Din is presented in the Muslim sources. During his period in power, jihad books, jihad sermons, and works praising the Holy City – the *Merits of Jerusalem* genre – proliferate. But perhaps the most rousing literary vehicle for jihad was the poetry written for and about Nur al-Din. This poetry stresses the spiritual dimensions of his jihad much more than the usual public ones. Saladin's future biographer, 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani, joined the service of Nur al-Din and he wrote poetry in praise of his master's pursuit of jihad, putting the following lines into the mouth of Nur al-Din:

I have no wish except jihad
Repose in anything other than it is exertion for me.
Seeking achieves nothing except by striving.
Life without the striving of jihad is an (idle) pastime.[11]

The successor of Nur al-Din, Saladin, is also the great *mujahid* in the Islamic sources. As in the time of Nur al-Din, the poets in Saladin's entourage also stress his prosecution of jihad, combined with his role as the ideal Sunni ruler. The well-known travelogue (*Rihla*) of the Spanish Muslim Ibn Jubayr, who wrote inter alia about the Holy Land when he passed through it in 1184 in the time of Saladin, has often been translated and used by historians. Nobody, however, seems to have paid due attention to a poem of his addressed to Saladin. This poem is to be found at the very beginning of the standard Arabic edition of the *Rihla* and is included amongst a series of extracts from later medieval Arab writers who used the work of Ibn Jubayr.[12] One such borrower was a later travel writer from Valencia, Muhammad al-'Abdari, who made the pilgrimage to Mecca in 1289.[13] In view of references in the poem to Saladin having purified Jerusalem from the infidel, the poem must have been written after 1187.[14]

It is a long poem, containing fifty-three lines. It can be divided loosely into four sections: praise of Saladin who has conquered Syria, a description of the illegal way in which pilgrims to Mecca have been treated by Saladin's customs officials in Alexandria, an appeal to him to rectify this matter, and finally a eulogy of Saladin.[15] Here are a few key lines from it:

How long have you been hovering among them (that is the Franks),
A lion hovering in the thicket?
You have broken their cross by force
And what a fine breaker you are!
Their kingdom has retreated in Syria
And has turned its back as if it has never been.
You have avenged the religion of corrections on your enemies.
God has chosen you as avenger.

It will be noted here that Ibn Jubayr, though a visitor to the Levant, speaks of Saladin as a lion, and as God's instrument on earth, and he uses the familiar image of the 'breaker of crosses' found in other anti-Christian jihad poetry.

Amongst the successors of Saladin, namely his family dynasty of the Ayyubids, the tradition of jihad poetry continued unabated, although some of its claims rang rather hollow in this age of relative détente with the Franks. However, it is important to mention here a poem composed by the professional poet, Ibn ʻUnayn, to celebrate the victory of Saladin's descendant, the sultan al-Kamil, over the Franks at Damietta in 1221:[16]

> On the morning we met before Damietta a mighty host of Byzantines, not
> to be numbered either for certain or (even) by guesswork.
> They agreed as to opinion and resolution and religion, even if they differed
> in language.
> They called upon the companions of the cross, and troops (of them)
> advanced as though the waves were ships for them.

This poem begins as it means to go on; it is infused with gloating irony, a poetic topos which had been developed by the ʻAbbasid poet, Abu Tammam, to deal with Muslim triumph over another Christian enemy, the Byzantines. Indeed, in the poem, the Crusaders are called 'a mighty host of Byzantines'; this is historically inaccurate, but it echoes a continuous past of adversarial conflict between Christendom and Islam. Yet, clearly, with the specific reference to Damietta, it is the hosts of the Fifth Crusade that are being routed.

In the rhythmic symmetry of the third line, the poetic device of *tibaq* (the placing of two words of opposite meanings in the same line) – 'they agreed . . . and they disagreed' . . . – is employed to suggest the shared ideological purpose of the European crusading Christian army, despite the multiplicity of their differing linguistic backgrounds. Europe as a whole is pitted against the forces of Islam. In the fourth line we hear one of the most common titles for the Crusaders in medieval Muslim writings – they are called *ansar al-salib* (the supporters, helpers, protectors of the Cross). There is also here probably a deliberate echo of the Arabic term for Christian, *nasrani*, which comes from the same Arabic root as *ansar*. It must be admitted that the symbol of the Cross became a focus of Muslim animosity in the Crusading period. It was a symbol of the conquests and occupation of a foreign invader, the Franks. Breaking crosses in battle was a symbolic act in which Christianity was defeated and Islam was triumphant.

In the fourth line there is an allusion to the fabled maritime skills of the Franks, skills not shared by their Muslim opponents in this period. According to the poet, the troops of the Franks pour forth as though the waves of their battle lines are like ships cresting the waves of the sea. Yet, despite the awe-inspiring billows of the advancing torrent of the Crusader armies – a deliberate attempt by the poet to inflate the magnitude of the Christian enemy – Muslim victory is assured.

The climax of the poem turns to the victor himself, the Muslim sultan, al- Kamil:

> We are led by a noble scion of the House of Ayyub,
> whose resolution disdains to be settled in any place of contentment.
> Noble in praise, devoid of shame, valorous, handsome of countenance,
> perfect in beauty and beneficence.

These lines praise the sultan al-Kamil directly and more allusively. In the first line he is called a noble scion of the family of Ayyub, Saladin's father, and is thus given an impeccable pedigree for leading the war against the Franks. In the next line he is the exemplar of physical and moral qualities, 'perfect in beauty and beneficence' (*kamil al-husni wa'l-husna*) – a deliberate pun on the sultan's name of al-Kamil, meaning 'the perfect one').

The next line reads as follows:

> By your life, the signal deeds of 'Isa are not hidden,
> They shine out radiant as the sun upon the farthest and the nearest.

The poet's choice of one of al-Kamil's long list of names, 'Isa, is probably deliberate too: a taunt at the Christian enemy, since 'Isa is, of course, the Arabic version of the name Jesus.

The poet continues as follows:

> He marched towards Damietta with every highborn champion,
> Viewing the descent into battle as the most salubrious of descents,
> And he removed from there the miscreants of Byzantium, and the
> Hearts of certain men were gladdened that afterwards made compact with sorrow;
> And he cleansed her of their impurity with his sword – a hero
> Regarding the acquisition of praise as the noblest of prizes.

The first hemistich of the last line is particularly significant – the Arabic is very forceful indeed:

> And he cleansed her of their impurity with his sword

The word used for 'filth' (*rijs*) is that denoting ritual impurity. Indeed, images of pollution and purification abound in the Muslim jihad literature of the Crusading period. And the poetry reflected real events: for example, Saladin purified the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem with rosewater in 1187 when he recaptured the Holy City for Islam.

Ibn 'Unayn then reaches the rousing climax of his celebratory ode, with a triumphal threat and a solemn warning: the present victory belongs to the Muslims, but the jihad is still ongoing:

> His swords have immortalised the memorable deeds of glory,
> Whose report will never pass away, though time itself shall perish.
> Our swords and their necks have known their places of encounter there;

The last words of the ode sound very grim indeed:

> And if they return to the attack, we too shall return!

General Reflections

We should remember that a wide range of jihad literature flooded into being at the time of Nur al-Din and Saladin and it remained an important instrument in the propaganda war against the Franks – letters exulting in victory, sermons rousing the faithful, books extolling the merits of jihad and of jihad in particular to regain Jerusalem. So poetry was only one of a number of overlapping literary genres that flourished, but clearly it was the one that was most intimately linked to the ruler and his court, a genre for his public prestige and personal gratification. Monumental inscriptions and even coins contained further allusions to jihad.

Who wrote the jihad poetry? The obvious pool of writers comprised the peripatetic poets, who still went from one small court to another, often travelling vast distances in search of fame, fortune and, above all, the patronage of a ruler, provincial governor or military commander. The life of the professional poet was not without its hazards. Ibn 'Unayn (d. 1233), the

author of the poem about Damietta already discussed, satirised Saladin so sharply that he was sent off into exile. He came back after Saladin's death and ingratiated himself with one of Saladin's successors at Damascus, even becoming his chief minister.[17]

Poetry did not, however, remain the preserve of the professional poet. An interesting development in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was the greater involvement by the bureaucratic elite in the writing of such poetry in the wake of the strong revival of Sunni Islam, especially under Turkish rule. It was, after all, only a short step from written high-flown rhyming prose (*sajj*), much in favour with the scribal elite of Syria and Egypt at the time of the Crusades, to composing panegyric poetry about the exploits of their military overlords in the jihad. So the scribes, advisers and ministers who travelled around in the entourage of the Turkish or Kurdish rulers – including Nur al-Din, Saladin and Baybars – enthusiastically picked up the pen and composed a substantial corpus of verse. Baybars' biographer, Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir, wrote vast amounts of poetry about his master – occasional poetry written to celebrate his master's victories, an elegy to be read over his tomb, and many other pieces.[18] Another government official, Ibn Mammati, who happened to be involved in the collecting of taxes, wrote a versified history of Saladin and many poems besides.[19] An intriguing example of a government official with a predilection for poetry is the famous chief minister of the Seljuq sultanate in Iraq and Iran, and a veritable polymath, al-Tughra'i (d. 1121), who is described by his biographer as surpassing 'all his contemporaries in the art of composing in prose and verse'. His most celebrated ode, written in 1111, contains sixty lines, all ending with the letter 'l'.[20] 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani, Saladin's biographer and, as already mentioned, the author of high-flown rhyming prose, collected with enormous energy a twenty-volumed anthology of twelfth-century poetry (*Kharidat al-qasr*), written by over a thousand poets. But by general consensus he was himself only a mediocre poet.

Why and when were the jihad poems written? Frequently, such poems were written afier a conquest, whether great or small: the capture of a minor citadel could produce poetry just as much as a major victory, such as the fall of Edessa to Zengi in 1144,[21] or the battle of Hattin in 1187. A number of poems were indeed composed praising Zengi's jihad. An ode was also written congratulating Zengi's son, Nur al-Din, on imprisoning the Crusader leader,

Joscelin.[22] The death of a ruler was especially, of course, the ideal moment to extol in poetic form his exploits in the jihad.

It is legitimate to ask to what extent such flowery Arabic jihad poetry was understood by the Turkish and Kurdish rulers of Syria, Egypt and Palestine, to whom it was addressed. After all, this was a court literature which rejoiced in rhetorical devices and carefully selected abstruse vocabulary which many Arabs themselves could not understand, let alone Turks and Kurds, who had often only recently entered the Arabic-speaking world and who spoke their own languages in their homes. Contemporary prose writing was also ornate in character and favoured form over content. Whether or not the non-Arab military leaders understand this literature remains uncertain, but it is clear that it was indeed read out in their presence as part of the ceremonies of the court. Perhaps an interpreter was used to explain the subtleties of the work as the public recitation proceeded. It is impossible to judge what the audience outside court circles might have been (and the word 'audience' is used advisedly here, for it was certainly poetry which was meant to be declaimed in public). There is no doubt that the Muslim elite – preachers, judges and teachers in the madrasas (religious colleges) – would have approved of the religious ethos of the poetry and would have appreciated the high level of its Arabic. But it is doubtful how much troops, from a multiplicity of ethnic backgrounds, standing for inspection on the parade ground, or about to enter the fray or to celebrate a victory, would have comprehended of such stylised Arabic material. Yet its public declamation would have enabled them to catch its solemn tone and to have been roused by it, in much the same way as non-Arabic speakers often did not understand the text of the Qur'an but were nevertheless moved by it, sometimes to tears. Poetry, the quintessential Arabic literary genre, can be said to work at a deep subliminal level on the emotions of its hearers.

The major themes, images, and topoi of this jihad poetry were largely inherited from a military past spent fighting Byzantium. The concept, though not the exact image, of conquest as resembling the deflowering of a virgin, an image beloved of the ninth-century poet, Abu Tammam, who spoke of 'swords swaying unsheathed' winning 'many a branch quivering on a sandhill',[23] is easily transferred by the poets of the early 1100s who described 'young girls' as 'almost wasting away with fear'[24] at the prospect of the Franks'

approach. Abu Tammam celebrates the Muslim victory over Byzantium at Amorium in the following lines, proclaiming:

> The days of victory have left pale of face as their name the sons of the Yellow Ones (the Byzantines) and have brightened the faces of the Arabs.[25]

Yellow, the colour of flight and cowardice, had long been associated in the medieval Muslim sources with Byzantines and this epithet was easily transferred to the Crusaders, who were known as the Yellow Tribe (Banu'l-Asfar).[26]

As in the past, the jihad poets of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries give a religious framework to the military activities of Muslim leaders. Muslim victories are divinely ordained. The poet Ibn al-Qaysarani, praising Zengi's conquest of Edessa, suggests that he was helped in his endeavours by divine assistance:

> Hosts of angels have provided you with regiments, surrounded by more regiments. For him who has heavenly angels for an army
> What country is there where his horses would not tread?[27]

It is common too for Muslim poets to liken great victories, such as Hattin, to those fought in the exemplary life of the Prophet Muhammad.

Among the new emphases to emerge in the poetry of this period are the twin religious themes of Christian pollution and Muslim purification, which are omnipresent in the jihad poetry of the time. The identification of the Franks with the pig, an animal included in the Qur'an under the same divine anathema as the monkey, is a key image. The Ayyubid poet Ibn al-Nabih praises Saladin's brother, al-'Adil, declaring:

> You have purified Jerusalem of their (the Franks') filth
> After it had been a refuge for pigs.[28]

Despite the use of this familiar stereotypical imagery for the Christians, it is probable that it acquired new relevance and edge in the twelfth century when, for the first time in history, the Muslim monuments in Jerusalem, the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque, were occupied and in Muslim eyes, 'polluted' by the presence of the Franks, an occupation symbolised by the giant cross placed atop the Golden Dome and visible for miles around.

New use of old imagery could be also be made in the case of Jerusalem itself. In the early centuries of Islam the Muslims were used to focusing on the conquest of the nearest seat of Christendom, Byzantium. High and low literature still cherished dreams of conquering Constantinople for Islam. Poets flattered their patrons who achieved minor victories on the Byzantine frontier: the capture of a single Byzantine fortress could permit expectations to be raised all over again.

In the twelfth century, the longed-for conquest of one great Christian capital is soon replaced by an intense desire to recapture another city, the very epicentre of Christianity – Jerusalem. And poets have a stock of well-tried topoi and rhetorical devices ready on the tips of their pens. Yet there were new aspects on which the poets could concentrate. The shift of emphasis from Constantinople to Jerusalem brought important changes with it; after all, Constantinople remained proudly unconquered and it contained no major Muslim holy sites. So the poetic focus on a humiliated Muslim Jerusalem is, of course, a theme unknown to earlier jihad poetry.

It must be admitted that this jihad poetry, much of it produced by the scribal class in Syria and Egypt, is not to be found nowadays in anthologies of the finest Arabic verse. Such poetry is clearly less focused on the elitist literary aims of the court poet of earlier generations; it is far more hortatory and didactic in nature and can be seen as an adjunct to the jihad sermons, the books of jihad and those belonging to the *Merits of Jerusalem* genre. The jihad poetry is functional and largely derivative in form and imagery. But it is not doggerel, either. It was recited at key historical moments; and afterwards, the medieval Muslim chroniclers place it deliberately and strategically in their works, at moments of high tension or significance in their narratives. So there too, on the pages of history books written for contemporaries and also for posterity, the jihad poetry serves as a solemn, if somewhat bombastic, reminder of the wider backcloth – a titanic struggle between Islam and Christianity – against which these events are being played out. The poetry is competent enough for its immediate purpose and occasionally, in the pen of real professional poets, such as Ibn al-Khayyat, lamenting the fall of Jerusalem, or Ibn ʿUnayn, exulting in victory at Damietta, it is poetry which reaches much greater heights.

How useful is this jihad poetry as historical evidence of the Muslim military and religious environment in Syria in the twelfth and thirteenth

centuries? Much of the poetry follows a long-established tradition, with a repertoire of set images and themes. These images and themes are also found in kindred religious literary genres, such as jihad sermons, which display the same rhetoric but which are based more explicitly on the Qur'an and the sayings of the Prophet. The same holds good for the wording of monumental inscriptions and official letters written by Muslim scribes on behalf of rulers. All this material reflects a milieu geared for jihad, even if Muslim rulers did not always prosecute it. In such a stylised literary genre as panegyric poetry, it is rare to find specific nuggets of 'fact'. There are, of course, references in the poems to names of citadels, cities, and individual warriors or rulers. But it is hard to construct a narrative from such references. It captures an atmosphere rather than relaying facts.

However, the very profusion of such jihad poetry is a clear indication of the nature of the religious milieu within which the Turkish 'Counter-Crusade' leaders operated. The theme of Jerusalem, for example, becomes more pressing and urgent in the poetry of Saladin's adviser, 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani: his insistence on the recapture of the Holy City reaches a powerful crescendo in his extant verse from the period 1180–7 and may have had an impact on Saladin's final decision to focus ever more intently on fighting the Franks.

Conclusions

This discussion has shown how the pre-Islamic ode with its pagan tribal character could be transformed into a core component in Arabic Muslim religious literature. Indeed, it proved to be elastic enough to adapt itself to the realities of running a vast Muslim empire. Moreover, this conventional form of medieval Arab panegyric poetry came to be deployed as a political and religious tool in the monumental struggle between Western Christendom and the Muslim world at the time of the Crusades. To state the obvious, jihad poetry is poetry in the service of religion. Its function mattered more at the time than its intrinsic quality.

Jihad poetry was not the creation of Muslim poets as a response to their unprecedented contact with *Western* Christendom at the time of the Crusades. What we see in twelfth and thirteenth century jihad poetry is in fact the easy and seamless transfer of earlier invective against Christian Byzantium to a new Christian target, the Crusaders. The Muslim poets of the twelfth and thirteenth

centuries built on the traditions of the great al-Mutanabbi who wrote in ringingly grandiose terms about the small-scale jihad warfare of his patron, Sayf al-Dawla, against Byzantium. The Muslim poets who extolled the virtues of Nur al-Din, Saladin and their successors in the jihad do not belong in the pantheon of the greatest names of medieval Arabic poetry. But their verses resonate with the spirit of a period which would change the relationship between Christendom and the Muslim world and would harden the ideological battle lines between them. The jihad poetry gives us insights into the stereotypical way in which the Muslims viewed the Christian 'other'. But the proliferation of such poetry at key historical moments, and especially in the build up to Hattin and the recapture of Jerusalem, is significant. Nor is this all. The selfsame tropes and stereotypical language resurface throughout the Ottoman period in prose and poetry alike, from an anonymous Ottoman account of the Turkish victory over the Hungarians at Nicopolis in 1396 to the inflated and vainglorious ode written by al-Budayr to celebrate the victory of Jazzar Pasha over Napoleon near Acre in 1799.[29] These formulae, then, survived in almost unaltered form for almost a millennium – and their day is not yet over.

Notes

1. There are many introductory works on classical Arabic poetry; two works which are still very useful are A. Hamori, *On the Art of Medieval Arabic Literature* (Princeton, 1974) and H. A. R. Gibb, *Arabic literature* (Oxford, 1974).
2. Cf. D. Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (Berkeley, 2005); C. Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (Edinburgh, 1999), 89–92.
3. *Arabic Poetry*, ed. and tr. A. J. Arberry (Cambridge, 1965), 52.
4. Cf. R. Blachère, *Un poète arabe du IVe siècle de l'Hégire (Xe siècle de J.-C.): About-Tayyib ul Motanabbi* (Paris, 1935).
5. Ibid., 76, *apud* E. Dermenghem, *Les plus beaux textes arabes* (Paris, 1951), 105 (my English translation).
6. *'ala qadr-i ahl al-'azm-i ta'ti al-'aza'imu / wa-ta'ti 'ala qadr-i al-kiram al-makarimu wa-ta'zumu fi 'ayn i al-saghir sigharuhum / wa-tasghuru fi 'ayn-i al-'azim al-'aza'imu*, Arberry, op.cit., 84.
7. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-a'yan*, tr. W. M. de Slane as *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary* (Paris, 1843), Vol. I, 111.
8. One of the early biographers of Saladin, Lane-Poole, for example, is very critical of the rhetorical flourishes of 'Imad al-Din; cited in H. A. R. Gibb, 'The Arabic

sources for the life of Saladin', in H. A. R. Gibb, *Studies in Islamic History*, ed. Y. Ibish (Beirut, 1972), 54. This view is shared inter alios by Gabrieli who complains of the 'wearisome obscurities' of 'Imad al-Din; cf. F. Gabrieli, *Arab Historians of the Crusades* (London, 1969), 114.

9. For references to the poems, cf. E. Sivan, *L'Islam et la Croisade* (Paris, 1968), 18, 24, 32, 36.
10. For a detailed discussion of these poems, cf. Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 70–1.
11. Abu Shama, *Kitab al-rawdatayn*, ed. M. H. M. Ahmad (Cairo, 1954), Vol. I, 625.
12. Ibn Jubayr, *Rihla*, ed. W. Wright (Leiden, 1907), 28–31.
13. Al-'Abdari, *Al-rihla al-maghribiyya*, ed. M. El-Fasi (Rabat,1968); cf. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn (*EI*[2]), s.v. 'Misrata' (T. Lewicki).
14. Ibn Jubayr made two further journeys east, one between 1189 and 1191, and then a second one in 1217. He died that same year in Alexandria; cf. *EI*[2], s.v. 'Ibn Djubayr' (C. Pellat).
15. In view of the fact that Broadhurst, the English translator of Ibn Jubayr's work, mentions that Ibn Jubayr's 'high literary reputation' among the Arabs was 'partly due to his poetical works', it is a pity that he does not translate any of the verses about Saladin; cf. Ibn Jubayr, *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr*, tr. R. J. C. Broadhurst (London, 1952), 20.
16. Arberry, *Arabic Poetry*, 122–5.
17. Arberry, *Arabic Poetry*, 174.
18. Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir, *Al-rawd al-zahir*, ed. A. A. Al-Khuwaytir (Riyadh, 1976).
19. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat*, tr. de Slane, Vol. I, 192.
20. Ibid., 462.
21. Imad al-Din, *Kharidat al-qasr: qism shu'ara' al-Sham*, pt 1 (Damascus, 1955), 110.
22. 'Imad al-Din, *Kharidat al-qasr*, 157.
23. Hamori, *Medieval Arabic Literature*, 127, 129.
24. Ibn al-Khayyat, *Diwan*, editor unidentified (Damascus, 1958), 185.
25. Arberry, *Arabic Poetry*, 62.
26. Cf. the discussion in Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, 240, 255.
27. 'Imad al-Din, *Kharidat al-qasr*, 110.
28. Ibn al-Nabih, *Diwan*, editor unidentified (Beirut, 1881), 121.
29. C. Hillenbrand, *Turkish Myth and Muslim Symbol: The Battle of Manzikert* (Edinburgh, 2007), 169–70, 182–4.

14

The Shiʿis of Aleppo in the Zengid Period: Some Unexploited Textual and Epigraphic Evidence

Introduction

For a long time now scholars of medieval Islamic history have been aware of the names of important chronicles which are no longer extant but of which fragments are still to be found in excerpted narratives preserved in the writings of later generations of medieval Islamic historians.

More recently, attempts have been made to piece together the contents of lost chronicles from scattered quotations in the works of other writers. For example, the Kuwaiti scholar Shayea Hajeri recently reconstructed a good portion of the contents of a non-extant history written by the Seljuq historian Muhammad ʿAbd al-Malik al-Hamadhani (d. 515/1121).[1] This was possible because of the presence of extensive quotations from it in the *ʿIqd al-juman*, the universal history of the Mamluk historian al-ʿAyni (d. 855/1451).[2]

Special mention must be made here of the important work of Ihsan ʿAbbas entitled *Shadharat min kutub mafquda fi'l-ta'rikh*, which, as its title indicates, contains sections from works lost over the centuries.[3] In the course of his long and productive career Claude Cahen spoke about the need to collect together the fragments of key non-extant medieval Islamic chronicles preserved in later sources, but in the end he did not do this.[4] Ihsan ʿAbbas, however, did, and his volume of excerpts from lost historical sources is a significant step forward. Indeed, it is rich in snippets, or sometimes more extended passages, from diverse and hitherto largely overlooked material.[5]

This chapter will examine the information provided in one important lost source from medieval Syria, the *Maʿadin al-dhahab* written by the

seventh-/thirteenth-century chronicler Ibn Abi Tayy, which deals with the sixth-/twelfth- and early seventh-/thirteenth-century history of Aleppo and, in particular, with the policies of the Zengids towards the Shiʿis of the city. Earlier scholarship on the history of Aleppo in this period has, of course, highlighted some of the significance of the testimony of Ibn Abi Tayy; but there is still more to be said on the topic of the Shiʿis.

A second resource for discussion in this chapter will be the monumental inscriptions in Aleppo which date from Zengid times. Previous research on such inscriptions has tended to be confined to their decipherment alone and there has been little attempt to analyse the links between the epigraphic and textual evidence for Zengid and early Ayyubid treatment of the Aleppan Shiʿis.

Ibn Abi Tayy (d. *c.* 630/1232–3)

Ibn Abi Tayy[6] was an administrator employed in Aleppo in the service of al-Malik al-Zahir Ghazi, the last son of Saladin to hold on to rule in a major principality.[7] Perhaps because he was a Twelver Shiʿi, few details can be found about his life in the rich Sunni historiography of the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods.[8] Amongst the historical writings of Ibn Abi Tayy, all of which are lost, was a biography of Saladin, but his best-known work, the one from which most later writers quote, is *Maʿadin al-dhahab* (*The Mines of Gold*), a chronicle which is both 'universal' in scope and also especially focused on the detailed history of his home city of Aleppo.[9] Despite his Twelver Shiʿi persuasions, the partiality of Ibn Abi Tayy for the Sunni ruling family of Saladin is clear, as Cahen pointed out long ago.[10]

Excerpts from this history are cited in the works of a number of later writers, such as ʿIzz al-Din Ibn Shaddad (d. 684/1285),[11] Sibt b. al-ʿAjami (d. 884/1479),[12] Ibn al-Shihna (d. 890/1485)[13] and, above all, in profusion, in the *Kitab al-rawdatayn* of Abu Shama (d. 665/1267),[14] and in the *Ta'rikh al-duwal wa'l-muluk* of Ibn al-Furat (d. 807/1405).[15] The earliest extant sections of this work by Ibn al-Furat are found in a still only partially edited manuscript in Vienna.[16] The part of this chronicle in the unpublished edition of Elshayyal begins in 501/1106–7 and is especially rich in material from Ibn Abi Tayy about Zengi and his son Nur al-Din in Aleppo. For example, for the years 522/1128 to 543/1149, the rule of Zengi and the early reign of

Nur al-Din in Aleppo, Ibn al-Furat quotes Ibn Abi Tayy on 101 occasions in 196 folios.[17] Through Abu Shama, Ibn Abi Tayy also provides detailed documentation on the struggle for power in Aleppo after the death of Nur al-Din in 569/1174, as well as the city's eventual conquest by Saladin and the subsequent rule of his son, al-Malik al-Zahir Ghazi.

Whenever the name of Ibn Abi Tayy is mentioned by modern scholars, it is almost inevitable that he is described as 'the Shiʿi chronicler of Aleppo'. Indeed, such harping on his Shiʿi affiliation seems to have defined him in modern scholarship. Claude Cahen launched this school of thought, writing as early as 1935[18] that the array of medieval Muslim sources which deal with the history of Syria in the sixth/twelfth and seventh/thirteenth centuries have common shortcomings, amongst which he singles out that their authors are tightly linked to the milieux of the Sunni bureaucracy and *ʿulama'*. It is these groups, he rightly says, that dominate the historiographical picture. Cahen underlines, moreover, that the province of Aleppo is largely Shiʿi and that although the Shiʿis also wrote their own chronicles, these were gradually destroyed. He was therefore delighted when he came across the Vienna Ibn al-Furat manuscript in which he noted that a 'Shiʿi chronicle', that of Ibn Abi Tayy, is largely preserved.[19] The biographer of Nur al-Din, Elisséeff, adds that Ibn Abi Tayy is the 'only Shiʿi chronicler from whose work Sunni historians were prepared to borrow'.[20]

Earlier generations of European scholars embraced the idea, put forward by the medieval Sunni sources which they had read, that Shiʿism was indeed a 'heretical' form of Islam. Sauvaget, brilliant though he was, was apt to use the word 'heresy' rather loosely when writing about Shiʿis.[21] And still today, the label 'Shiʿi' itself is used very imprecisely as a 'blanket term' by some scholars, who fail to distinguish between the Ismaʿili Shiʿi caliphate in Egypt, their schismatic brethren, the Nizaris, in Alamut in north-west Iran from 1094 onwards, and the Twelver (Imami) Shiʿis, long established in northern Syria. The term 'Rafidi' also seems to have been used to denote 'Twelvers'.[22] Confusing phraseology is used by Elisséeff when he speaks of 'les Ismaʿiliens et les Chiites d'Alep'.[23]

Be that as it may, it is certainly unwise to imply that the Shiʿis of Aleppo were a monolithic group. It is indeed probable that some later Sunni chroniclers who did borrow material from Ibn Abi Tayy may not necessarily have

been interested in the doctrinal differences of the various Shiʿi groupings in earlier centuries. Some chroniclers use several terms without explanation: Ibn al-ʿAdim calls the Zengid poet Ibn Munir, for example, a 'Twelver' and 'Rafidi', whilst ʿIzz al-Din Ibn Shaddad uses the title 'al-ʿAlawiyyin'.[24] But Ibn Abi Tayy, not surprisingly given his own religious persuasion, certainly distinguishes between the Ismaʿilis and the Twelvers in Aleppo.

The Shiʿis in Northern Syria

By the time of the Crusades Shiʿi Islam had put down deep roots in Syria, and especially in the region of Aleppo. Indeed, Halm has plausibly argued that by the sixth/twelfth century Shiʿis were numerous in northern Syria and that in Aleppo itself perhaps they even outnumbered its Sunni inhabitants.[25] The spread of Shiʿism in various forms in the Aleppan region went back at least to the rule of the Arab Hamdanid princes in the fourth/tenth century, one of whom, Saʿd al-Dawla, made the Twelver Shiʿi call to prayer from the Great Mosque in Aleppo in 358/969.[26] After the Seljuq sultan Alp Arslan's siege of Aleppo in 463/1071, the local ruler of the city had the *khutba* pronounced there in the names of the ʿAbbasid caliph and of Alp Arslan, but this by no means put an end to Shiʿi loyalties in the city. Indeed, as Zakkar points out, the muezzins of Aleppo continued to pronounce the Shiʿi call to prayer for a long time to come.[27] After the weakening of Seljuq power and unity in 485/1092 caused by the deaths of Nizam al-Mulk and Malikshah in quick succession, the Turkish princes and warlords who ruled Syria were keen not to upset their subject populations. They therefore showed a generally flexible attitude to the different doctrinal persuasions of the people in the region.

However, the religious situation was complicated by the activities of competing Shiʿi groups, both from Egypt where, after 487/1094 and the Nizari schism, one form of Ismaʿili Shiʿism prevailed under the so-called Mustaʿlians, and also from Iran where the Nizaris of Alamut under Hasan-i Sabbah were pursuing vigorous proselytising campaigns. From the first decade of the sixth/twelfth century onwards, Persian Nizaris focused their sights on Aleppo and they soon came to control the city, where they set up a *dar al-daʿwa* in the reign of the Seljuq prince Ridwan, who was sympathetic to their cause.[28]

During his brief rule at Aleppo, the Artuqid ruler Sulayman began building the first madrasa in the city (*al-madrasa al-zajjajiyya*) in 510/1116, but the local Shiʿis invaded the site and pulled down what had already been erected, which barely reached its tenth building course.[29] According to the topographical work on Aleppo by Ibn al-Shihna:

> When he [Sulayman] wanted to have it [the madrasa] built, the Aleppans opposed it because at that time they were mostly Shiʿis.

Ibn al-Shihna adds that 'whatever building went on in the daytime, the Shiʿis demolished in the night'.[30] The authorities intervened and the building was completed by the end of 516/beginning of 1123.[31] Soon afterwards, Aleppo came under the rule of the Zengid family.

Zengid Rule in Aleppo

The Zengid family, beginning with Qasim al-Dawla Aq Sunqur al-Hajib, the first ruler of the dynasty, behaved cautiously with the Shiʿis of Aleppo. In particular, Zengid involvement in the monument known as the *mashhad al-dikka* began with him. According to the sixth-/twelfth-century traveller al-Harawi (d. 611/1214), one of the two principal Shiʿi pilgrimage sites in Aleppo, the *mashhad al-dikka* (the Shrine of the Platform)[32] was situated to the west of the city[33] and it housed the tomb of al-Muhassin b. al-Husayn, the great-grandson of the Prophet Muhammad.[34] The monument had been built by the Hamdanid ruler, Sayf al-Dawla,[35] and Ibn Abi Tayy mentions that he himself saw a long Kufic inscription in the name of Sayf al-Dawla in a little basalt door in the *mashhad*.[36] Ibn Shaddad reports that the Mirdasid rulers of Aleppo had shown an interest in the shrine. When the Turkish governor, Aq Sunqur, Zengi's father, took over rule in Aleppo, he realised the importance of the *mashhad al-dikka*, the major focus of Shiʿi piety in the city, and he saw that looking after it could prove a way of securing Shiʿi loyalty to his rule. According to Ibn Shaddad, Aq Sunqur built a water installation (*masnaʿ li'l-maʾ*) at the shrine and wrote his name on it.[37] Ibn al-Shihna says more, quoting an eyewitness account from Ibn Abi Tayy mentioning that he visited the *mashhad al-dikka* and that he saw for himself the name of Aq Sunqur engraved on it.[38] According to Ibn Abi Tayy, Aq Sunqur rebuilt the southern wall of the shrine because it had collapsed, and he endowed it with a *waqf* on

a local mill. He placed a belt around the stone of the tomb, decorated it with silver studs and covered it with a cloth.[39]

When Aq Sunqur died in 522/1128, Zengi hurried to take Aleppo. According to Ibn Abi Tayy, Zengi captured the city on 1 Muharram of that year. He presented himself as the son of Aq Sunqur. Zengi had been born in Aleppo and for that reason 'the Aleppans were well disposed towards him and they liked him'.[40] To gain favour with the population he brought the remains of his father to be housed in Aleppo.[41] But even such a redoubtable figure as Zengi did not attempt to impose Sunni Islam there, preferring instead to allow the city's long-established Twelver Shi'i community to continue to perform their own rituals.

This pragmatic approach on Zengi's part was extended only to the Twelvers (the Imamiyya). No such tolerance was shown to the Isma'ilis in northern Syria, as is revealed by a short but telling extract from Ibn Abi Tayy quoted by Ibn al-Furat under the year 527/1131:

> The Isma'ilis fought their neighbours, both Muslims and Franks, and everyone hated having them close by.[42]

Zengi returned to the city periodically,[43] to rest between campaigns if he was in the area, but also presumably to remind the population of his terrifying personality and military power and to check that inter-religious feuding was not causing too much unrest.

Little attention has been paid to the evidence of a monumental inscription in Zengi's name in Aleppo,[44] but it does shed interesting light on the religious climate of the city under his rule. The inscription is found on the mausoleum of Shaykh al-Muhassin, and it is dated Muharram 537/August 1142. It is significant that Zengi chose to have a very strongly worded inscription placed on the principal Twelver Shi'i shrine in Aleppo and that the inscription is dated in the key Shi'i month of Muharram. By the time the inscription was completed – 537/1142 – Zengi's authority over his territories was firmly established. The wording of the inscription reflects self-confidence and Zengi is given grandiose political and religious titles. The reader of this very long inscription would not fail to be impressed by a triumphant set of political titles honouring Zengi in three languages: Arabic – *malik umara' al-mashriq wa'l-maghrib*; Persian – *shahriyar al-Sham wa'l-'Iraqayn*, *pahlavan-i*

jahan, *Khusraw-i Iran*; and Turkish – *Alp Ghazi Agh* [45] *Arslan Inanj Qutlugh Tughriltegin*. Zengi is also given a whole series of religious honorific titles, such as *rukn al-Islam*, *jalal al-umma*, *qutb al-khilafa*, together with splendid epithets which present him as an ideal jihad warrior, including *qamiʿ al-kufra wa'l-mushrikin* and *zaʿim al-mujahidin*.[46] These last titles, it should be noted, are found in an inscription which actually pre-dates Zengi's major triumph over the Crusaders at Edessa; indeed, they ring rather hollow since Zengi had achieved few notable victories in the jihad until he took Edessa.

The exact motivation for the inscription cannot, of course, be reconstructed. But its message to those that could understand it may perhaps be interpreted as both a warning and a promise. It reminds the Twelvers of Aleppo that they are under a strong Sunni ruler who will brook no attempts to undermine him, whilst at the same time it suggests that, despite the credentials of a Sunni Muslim Turkish sultan accorded him, Zengi will offer this Shiʿi shrine his protection and will allow it to continue to be a site of pious visitation. In the inscription Zengi validates his political ownership of the shrine and records that for posterity. It is, however, worth remembering the fragility of human power, demonstrated by the fact that only four years later Zengi was murdered in his tent by one of his own entourage.

No doubt profiting from the reputation of his formidable father, Nur al-Din took power in Aleppo without opposition in Rabiʿ II 541/September 1146.[47] The valuable extant material from the history of Ibn Abi Tayy selected for inclusion by Ibn al-Furat traces the various stages in a worsening relationship between Nur al-Din and the Twelver Shiʿis of Aleppo, an aspect of his career which is often overlooked.

Following the example of the fourth-/eleventh-century Arab Mirdasid dynasty in Aleppo, and then of his grandfather Aq Sunqur and his father Zengi, Nur al-Din began cautiously with the Shiʿi population of the city and initially he treated them well.[48] Ibn Abi Tayy mentions that on his entry into Aleppo Nur al-Din rode to the *mashhad al-dikka*, visiting the tomb of the person buried in it; he stayed there for part of a day and wrote verses on its wall in his own hand. He then wrote his name there and that of his father as well. These verses remained written on the shrine for some years until one of its guardians erased them.[49] It is interesting to note that Abu Shama mentions that Nur al-Din had fine handwriting (*hasan al-khatt*).[50] Nur al-Din also

ordered the construction of a cistern (*sihrij*) and 'an ablution hall with many compartments for the benefit of those living there'.[51]

This textual information about the visit of Nur al-Din to the *mashhad al-dikka* mentioned by Ibn Abi Tayy is corroborated by epigraphic evidence.[52] Previous scholarship has pointed this out rather in passing and has not examined some of the implications of the visit. As was the case with Zengi, the visit of Nur al-Din to the *mashhad al-dikka* is recorded on the mausoleum of Shaykh al-Muhassin. The inscription, dated Rabiʿ II 541/September 1146, in the very month of his arrival in Aleppo, is written in the name of Nur al-Din in four lines of Kufic in an elaborate triple rhyming scheme. It is clearly a short postscript to the inscription in Zengi's name from 537/1142. Its string of honorific titles stress the power and the extent of the rule of Nur al-Din, repeating several of the Persianate titles already used for Zengi, such as Khusraw and Shahriyar.[53]

Ibn Abi Tayy records under the same year that Nur al-Din allowed the Shiʿi call to prayer to continue unchallenged:

> My father told me that at the beginning of his reign Nur al-Din kept to the opinion of his father, in treating the Aleppans kindly, in leaving them be, letting them perform their way of prayer openly in the eastern part of the Great Mosque and pronounce the call to prayer 'Come to the best of works' on the minarets of Aleppo, (even) on that of the Great Mosque and the citadel, and having frequent contact with them.[54]

This short-lived initial tolerant stance of Nur al-Din towards the Twelvers of Aleppo at the beginning of his reign, against which the local Sunnis protested in vain, does not accord with the usual presentation of him in Sunni sources of the time, where he is consistently portrayed as the unyieldingly Sunni *mujahid*, fighting the Franks outside his realm and 'heretics' inside it. Their narrative of the career of Nur al-Din within Aleppo begins emphatically with his taking a severe line with the Twelvers in 543/1148–9. By that year, Nur al-Din was issuing a series of repressive measures against the Twelvers.[55] This change of policy was a direct result of interference from the Sunni *ʿulama'* from Damascus in the build-up to a political marriage which Nur al-Din wanted to contract with the daughter of the ruler of Damascus, Muʿin al-Din Unur.[56] According to the testimony of Ibn Abi Tayy, a Damascene deputa-

tion objected to the way in which the Shiʿis made the call to prayer and to the mention of their Twelve Imams in funeral processions. The prince of Damascus found these details repugnant. So Nur al-Din forbade the Shiʿi call to prayer from the minaret of the Great Mosque. He then summoned the jurists and made a profession of the Sunni faith (*madhhab ahl al-sunna*) in front of them and the marriage was formally concluded.[57]

It is at this point that the other Sunni chroniclers recording the career of Nur al-Din provide full details of his harsh measures taken against the Twelvers of Aleppo. The account of Ibn al-Qalanisi, the chronicler of Damascus, is very informative about this episode which, of course, helps to build up the profile of Nur al-Din as a strong supporter of Sunni Islam. Ibn al-Qalanisi mentions that Nur al-Din suppressed the formula '*hayy ʿala khayr al-ʿamal*'[58] at the end of the early morning call to prayer and the public cursing of the Companions. He also refers to the support for this course of action given to Nur al-Din by a religious scholar from Damascus, al-Balkhi, and the Sunnis of Aleppo, but he adds revealingly:

> This matter weighed heavily on the Ismaʿiliyya and the people of the Shiʿa (*ahl al-Shiʿa*), their hearts were grieved by it and they stormed and raged at it.[59]

It should be noted here that Ibn al-Qalanisi differentiates in his account between the Ismaʿilis and the Twelvers and that it would appear that both groups were still present in Aleppo. Ibn al-Qalanisi hints, however, that these groups were so terrified of Nur al-Din that they did not protest in public about at these measures and kept a low profile:

> They then calmed down and desisted, out of fear of the famous Nuriyya violent attacking (*satwa*).[60]

Sibt b. al-Jawzi also devotes space in his history to this episode, no doubt with the same aim as Ibn al-Qalanisi. Under the same year he writes:

> Nur al-Din removed the *adhan* '*hayy ʿala khayr al-ʿamal*' and the cursing of the Companions and he said 'I will fight anyone who returns to it'.[61]

Ibn al-ʿAdim, the local chronicler of Aleppo, goes even further, mentioning that Nur al-Din or al-Balkhi (it is not clear from the Arabic text which of

the two it was) sat under the minaret of the mosque with the local religious scholars and threatened:

> Anyone who does not pronounce the legal (*mashru'*) *adhan*, throw him from the minaret on his head.[62]

Ibn al-Qalanisi mentions that in Rajab 543/November–December 1148 quarrels broke out amongst religious scholars in the Great Mosque in Damascus about religious rituals and that in Sha'ban of that same year / December 1148–January 1149 their permission to give lectures there was cancelled.[63]

The imposition of Sunni orthodox ritual in the mosque was accompanied by a rebuilding programme launched by Nur al-Din in Aleppo. He continued, it would appear, to be under pressure from the powerful Sunni religious scholars in Damascus, and above all, from al-Balkhi, who stirred up animosity against the Shi'is and issued a fatwa that every responsible person should fight them.[64] Ibn al-'Adim records under the year 543/1148–9 that Nur al-Din began to renovate madrasas and *ribat*s in the city and to attract scholars and *fuqaha'* there. He founded a Hanafi madrasa at the Hallawiyya mosque in the *suq al-sarrajin* and appointed al-Balkhi to teach there.[65] A long inscription in the building dated Shawwal 543/February–March 1149 confirms the evidence from the written sources that Nur al-Din converted the Hallawiyya mosque into a madrasa. The inscription accords Nur al-Din many honorific titles, placing a strong emphasis on his role as a fighter of rebels and heretics at home and of infidels and polytheists abroad. Soon after that he established the Nuriyya madrasa for the Shafi'i *madhhab*.[66]

But it was not easy to dislodge the deep-rooted allegiance to Shi'i belief in Aleppo. Tough action was needed. One incident affected the family of Ibn Abi Tayy most directly. In 543/1148–9 his father, Zafir b. 'Ali,[67] was one of the leading Twelvers whom Nur al-Din ordered to be shut up in the *burj al-zayt* in the citadel. However, in his account entitled 'On the rejection of the *madhhab* of the Shi'a' (*fi inkar madhhab al-Shi'a*) quoted through Ibn al-Furat, Ibn Abi Tayy relates an alleged dream of Nur al-Din about the Twelvers in the citadel. It disturbed him so much that instead of killing them he decided just to banish them from the city.[68]

Adherence to Twelver Shi'ism was not so easily eradicated in Aleppo. A further attempt to reinstate Twelver practices was made in 550/1155, but

it proved abortive. The episode occurred at a time when Nur al-Din was very ill. A Shiʿi leader within Aleppo made the population swear an oath of allegiance to Nusrat al-Din Amir-i Amiran, the brother of Nur al-Din. The Shiʿi *adhan* was proclaimed from the Friday mosque and the *khatib*, dressed in white, recited blessings on the Expected Imam.[69] In his version of the story, Sibt b. al-ʿAjami relates that Shiʿis, notables and ordinary people took an oath of support for Amir-i Amiran, asking him in his turn to allow them to reinstate the Shiʿi *adhan*. He agreed to that. But Nur al-Din recovered his health, sat down in a portico (*tarima*) overlooking the city so that all the population could see him and the Sunni call to prayer was made instead. According to Sibt b. al-ʿAjami, 'more than ten thousand people assembled under the minaret, brandishing sabres, but al-Balkhi rebuked them and recited a Qur'anic verse (4: 58) exhorting them to obey. So the riot calmed down'.[70] Sauvaget comments rather prematurely that this incident marked 'the last violent reaction of heresy'.[71] A later episode is recorded by Ibn al-Shihna who mentions that

> on the night of Wednesday 27 Shawwal 564/24 July 1169, in the reign of Nur al-Din, the Ismaʿilis burned down the great mosque and the markets that surrounded it. Nur al-Din devoted the greatest zeal to rebuilding the monument.[72]

Moreover, not surprisingly, when changes of regime occurred, religious dissensions re-surfaced in Aleppo. Discord broke out between the Sunnis and Shiʿis in Aleppo just after the death of Nur al-Din and the pillaging of the houses of prominent religious figures followed.[73]

Postscript

The evidence of Ibn Abi Tayy on early Ayyubid Aleppo is quoted extensively by Abu Shama. From the beginning of Ayyubid rule in the city the stance of Ibn Abi Tayy is very favourable to the new dynasty, no doubt, in part at least, because he worked as an administrator for Saladin's family and also as a result of the more conciliatory policy adopted by the Ayyubids towards the Twelver Shiʿis who lived in Aleppo.[74]

After the death of Nur al-Din in 569/1174, Saladin took a long time, in fact eight and a half years, to gain possession of Aleppo. Yet clearly he saw it

as strategically important.[75] Ibn al-Athir points out that the capture of Aleppo in Muharram 579/May 1183 was crucial for Saladin:

> Saladin's power became established by taking possession of it, when (previously) it had been shaking.[76]

A short while after Saladin's conquest of Aleppo, he placed one of his four sons, al-Malik al-Zahir Ghazi, in charge of the city. Al-Malik al-Zahir did much to strengthen the walls and citadel of Aleppo.[77] He also rebuilt the southern wall of the *mashhad al-dikka* in 609/1212; this is recorded in a dated inscription, as well as by Ibn Shaddad.[78] The monument known as the *mashhad al-Husayn* was built in Aleppo in early Ayyubid times, and this must have been with his approval. Indeed, Saladin gave it a gift of 10,000 dirhams and al-Malik al-Zahir established a *waqf* of 6,000 dirhams on it.[79]

Some General Reflections

The main emphasis of the discussion has focused on Nur al-Din who is regarded as one of the major heroes of the Muslim 'Counter-Crusade'. The prevailing image of him presented in the medieval Muslim sources is one of strict Sunni orthodoxy and determined pursuit of jihad against the Franks. This stance is also shown in his tough measures against Shiʿis, both Twelvers and Ismaʿilis, in Syria. The value of the evidence about Nur al-Din presented in the lost history of the Twelver Shiʿi chronicler Ibn Abi Tayy lies in his recording of an evolution in the attitude of Nur al-Din towards the Shiʿis in his home city of Aleppo. After a conciliatory start, Nur al-Din then fought hard to suppress what he and his entourage viewed as 'heterodox elements' in Aleppo and he forbade public displays of the Shiʿi form of worship. If he had not adopted this approach, his expansionist plans in the rest of Syria would have been prejudiced, since to take and hold Damascus he would need the strong support of the Sunni religious elite in that city. He made a strategic marriage with the daughter of the ruler of Damascus, Unur, who allowed this to go ahead only if Nur al-Din dealt firmly with the Shiʿis of Aleppo.

In contrast to Ibn Abi Tayy, the other Muslim chroniclers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries – Ibn al-Qalanisi, Ibn al-Athir, Ibn al-ʿAdim, Sibt b. al-Jawzi, and others – present a unified front in their portrayal of Nur al-Din as a severe opponent of the Shiʿis of Aleppo. Ibn Abi Tayy gives a

more nuanced view. It is clear from his testimony that when Nur al-Din entered Aleppo as its ruler for the first time in 541/1146, after the murder of his father Zengi, he came in a mood conciliatory to the Shiʿis of the city. The evidence of Ibn Abi Tayy is, moreover, supported by the words of a key monumental inscription in Aleppo, that engraved on the *mashhad al-dikka*, a shrine housing the remains of al-Muhassin b. al-Husayn, the great-grandson of the Prophet. This was a shrine much beloved of the local Shiʿis.

What could have been the motivation for Nur al-Din to inscribe verses on the wall of the shrine? And allegedly in Arabic in his own hand? The graffito could have been prompted by the tendency of any visitor, especially an important one, to record for posterity that he had visited the monument. The gesture of Nur al-Din in going to the Shiʿi shrine could, moreover, have been political; he wished to placate the local Shiʿis and to ensure his takeover of power in this Shiʿi stronghold. The level of knowledge of Arabic possessed by the Turkish sultans and military commanders of the sixth/twelfth century is unlikely to have been at the lofty level of epigraphy, but nonetheless the story was probably current by the time of the father of Ibn Abi Tayy in local Shiʿi folklore that Nur al-Din had written lines in his own hand on the shrine.

The present paper has looked especially at the evidence of a 'lost' source, the history of Ibn Abi Tayy. This case study raises wider questions, such as whether such sources, in the form in which they are quoted by later writers, contain valuable information, or what kind of problems are inherent in using the evidence of lost sources as they are presented in later writings, or whether such sources represent different viewpoints from those of our other sources, and finally, the nature of the motivation of the later chroniclers in selecting which passages to include.

It is hoped that this paper has shown that the evidence of lost sources, however fragmentary, can be used to confirm or modify received versions of 'events', which are otherwise treated across the board in a rather uniform way within the historiographical tradition. In the case of the careers of Zengi and Nur al-Din, it might well be thought that there was little more to be said by now. But an analysis of the evidence of Ibn Abi Tayy shows that the formation of the image of Nur al-Din as a pious, indeed zealous, Sunni hero took some time to develop. The extensive quotations of his work by Ibn al-Furat are very useful indeed in the task of contextualising more deeply the religious

and political environment of Zengid Aleppo. Through the lost work of Ibn Abi Tayy, clearer distinctions can be made in the complex history of Shiʿism in northern Syria, as he separates the Twelvers and the Ismaʿilis and avoids the 'blanket' term 'Shiʿi' used by Sunni writers. Similarly, he sheds light, through citations in Abu Shama, on early Ayyubid rule in Aleppo which appears to have been benevolent towards the Twelver Shiʿis.

It can, of course, be argued that the excerpts from lost sources presented in later works are problematic, since we cannot be sure that the compiler has not tampered with the original Arabic in some way or other, perhaps changing the wording to clarify the meaning of an obscure phrase, omitting part of an account or doctoring it to suit a particular argument or viewpoint. Often, an anecdote probably passed through one or more other channels en route from the original lost source to the final expression of it in a much later extant source, such as Ibn al-Furat.[80] But in the case of Zengid Aleppo specifically, epigraphic evidence dovetails neatly and persuasively with the information he provides from the lost chronicle of Ibn Abi Tayy.

At the level of checking small 'factual' details, such as dates and names, lost sources can be useful in providing diverse supplementary data, in much the same way that Hadith literature and Muslim legal works do. Evidence from lost sources is especially important for historical periods where there are lacunae in the historiographical tradition. So Ibn Abi Tayy is important because of the lack of extant Muslim contemporary sources on the history of Syria for the first two-thirds of the sixth/twelfth century, apart from the work of Ibn al-Qalanisi.

Is Ibn Abi Tayy an exceptional case, in that his work seems to have survived when that of other Shiʿi writers of his era were lost or destroyed? Was he protected, as it were, by Sunni Ayyubid patronage? Or was his work viewed by Sunni writers as especially good, so good in fact that, exceptionally, it transcended doctrinal divisions? These are only speculative questions, of course, but the often unique information that his text contains is itself ample warrant for looking at it and an encouragement to examine fragments from other lost sources in a consistent and methodical manner.

Notes

1. For further details on this scholar, cf. C. Cahen, 'The historiography of the Seljuqid period', in B. Lewis and P. M. Holt (eds), *Historians of the Middle East* (London, New York and Toronto, 1962), 61–2, 69.
2. Al-ʿAyni: *ʿIqd al-juman fi ta'rikh ahl al-zaman*, ed. S. Hajeri, *A Critical Edition of the Eleventh Volume of ʿIqd al-juman fi ta'rikh ahl al-zaman*, unpublished PhD thesis (University of Edinburgh, 2007).
3. Ihsan ʿAbbas: *Shadharat min kutub mafquda fi'l-ta'rikh* (Beirut, 1408/1988).
4. Cahen, 'Historiography', pp. 60–1; C. Cahen, 'Editing Arabic chronicles; a few suggestions', in C. Cahen: *Les peuples musulmans dans l'histoire médiévale* (Damascus, 1977), 19, 23.
5. The excerpts ʿAbbas chose from non-extant sources come from the works of a wide range of authors, including the famous Munqidh family from Northern Syria.
6. His full name was Yahya b. Hamid al-Najjar al-Halabi, better known as Ibn Abi Tayy Muntakhab al-Din. For details of his work, cf. C. Cahen, 'Une chronique chiite au temps des Croisades', *Comptes-rendus des Séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* (1935), 258–69; C. Cahen, *La Syrie du Nord à l'époque des Croisades et la principauté franque d'Antioche* (Paris, 1940), 55–7; A.-M. Eddé, 'Sources arabes des XIIe et XIIIe siècles d'après le dictionnaire biographique d'Ibn al-ʿAdim (*Bughyat al-Talab fi Ta'rikh Halab*)', in R. Curiel and R. Gyselen (eds), *Itinéraires d'Orient. Hommages à Claude Cahen*, *Res Orientale*s VI (1994), 300. Eddé gives the death date of Ibn Abi Tayy as 'around 630/1232–33'; cf. A.-M. Eddé, *La principauté ayyoubide d'Alep* (*579/1183–658/1260*) (Stuttgart, 1999), 19.
7. R. S. Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols: The Ayyubids of Damascus, 1193–1260* (Albany, 1977), 140. Al-Malik al-Zahir died in the citadel at Aleppo on 25 Jumada II 613 / 10 October 1216; cf. Ibn al-ʿAdim: *Zubdat al-halab fi ta'rikh Halab*, ed. S. Zakkar (Damascus, 1997), II, 639.
8. De Slane notes that Ibn Abi Tayy had no obituary notices; cf. *Recueil des historiens des croisades: Historiens orientaux* (Paris, 1872) [henceforth cited as *RHC/HO*], I, L.
9. Cahen, 'Chronique', 261.
10. Cahen, *Syrie*, 57.
11. ʿIzz al-Din Ibn Shaddad, *Al-aʿlaq al-khatira fi dhikr umara' al-Sham wa'l-Jazira* (Petersburg), MS. 162 ff. 20b–21a, partial edition M. Sobernheim,

'Das Heiligtum Shaikh Muhassin in Aleppo', in *Mélanges Hartwig Derenbourg* (*1844–1908*) (Paris, 1909), 381–3.

12. Sibt b. al-'Ajami, *Kunuz al-dhahab fi ta'rikh Halab*, partial tr. J. Sauvaget, *Les trésors d'or de Sibt ibn al-Ajami* (Beirut, 1950), for example 162–4.
13. Ibn al-Shihna, *Al-durr al-muntakhab*, tr. J. Sauvaget, *'Les perles choisies' d'Ibn Ach-Chihna* (Beirut, 1933), 64, 76–7, 85–7.
14. Abu Shama, *Kitab al-rawdatayn fi akhbar al-dawlatayn*, eds M. H. M. Ahmad and M. M. Ziyada (Cairo, 1956–62); partial edition and French translation, *RHC/HO*, IV, 2–522; V, 3–206.
15. Ibn al-Furat: *Ta'rikh al-duwal wa'l-muluk* (Vienna), MS. A. F. 118, partial edition M. F. Elshayyal, *A Critical Edition of Volume II of Ta'rikh al-duwal wa'l-muluk, by Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Rahim b. 'Ali Ibn al-Furat*, unpublished PhD thesis (University of Edinburgh, 1986). This includes an edition of vol. II, which covers the years 522/1128 – 543/1148–9 and gives a summary of major events. Ursula and Malcolm Lyons point out that Ibn al-Furat 'selects and adapts' previous sources, 'both in direct quotations, acknowledged and unacknowledged, and in paraphrases'; cf. U. and M. C. Lyons: *Ayyubids, Mamlukes and Crusaders* (Cambridge, 1971), I, vii.
16. Ibn al-Furat, *Ta'rikh* (Vienna), MS. A. F. 118.
17. Ibn al-Furat, *Ta'rikh*, ed. Elshayyal, 20.
18. Cahen, 'Chronique', 258–9.
19. Cahen, 'Editing Arabic chronicles', 23.
20. N. Elisséeff, *Nur ad-Din: un grand prince musulman de Syrie au temps des Croisades* (Damascus, 1967), I, p. 40.
21. Cf., for example, J. Sauvaget, *Alep. Essai sur le développement d'une grande ville syrienne, des origines au milieu du XIXe siècle* (Paris, 1941), I, p. 115.
22. Cf. Ibn al-'Adim, *Bughyat al-talab fi ta'rikh Halab*, ed. S. Zakkar (Damascus, 1988), III, 1155, *apud* J.-M. Mouton, *Damas et sa principauté sous les Saljoukides et les Bourides 468–549/1076–1154. Vie politique et religieuse* (Cairo, 1994), 343. For a nuanced discussion of the significance of the term 'Rafidi', cf. L. Pouzet: *Damas au VIIe/XIIIe s. Vie et structures religieuses dans une métropole islamique* (Beirut, 1988), 252.
23. Elisséeff, *Nur ad-Din*, II, 428.
24. Ibn Shaddad, *Al-a'laq*, ed. Sobernheim, 382.
25. H. Halm, *Shi'a Islam: From Religion to Revolution* (Princeton, 1997), 44.
26. S. Zakkar, *The Emirate of Aleppo 1004–1094* (Beirut, 1971), 255; Elisséeff, *Nur ad-Din*, II, 428–30.

27. Zakkar, *Emirate*, 250.
28. T. K. El-Azhari, *The Saljuqs of Syria during the Crusades 463–549 A.H./1070–1154 A.D.* (Berlin, 1997), 232; F. Daftary, *Isma'ilis in Medieval Muslim Societies* (London, 2005), 141; Elisséeff, *Nur ad-Din*, II, 428.
29. Sauvaget, *Aleppo*, 122, citing Ibn al-Furat, *Ta'rikh* (Vienna), MS. A. F., I, f. 162r.
30. Ibn al-Shihna, *Al-durr*, tr. Sauvaget, 108.
31. Elisséeff, *Nur ad-Din*, II, p. 429.
32. Cf. al-Harawi, *Kitab al-isharat ila ma'rifat al-ziyarat*, ed. J. Sourdel-Thomine (Damascus, 1953), 4; Eddé, *Principauté*, 448–9.
33. According to Sobernheim, the shrine was situated to the west of the city, around one and a half kilometres from the Antioch gate; cf. Sobernheim, 'Heiligtum', 379.
34. Al-Muhassin was recognised by the Shi'is as the third son of 'Ali, whilst according to one tradition current in Aleppo, he was a son of al-Husayn born shortly after Karbala'; cf. Eddé, *Principauté*, 448–9.
35. Sobernheim, 'Heiligtum', 380; Sauvaget, *Alep*, I, 106–7; Eddé, *Principauté*, 448–9. The monument that exists today is that reconstructed by the three Zengid rulers, Aq Sunqur, Zengi and Nur al-Din; cf. Elisséeff, *Nur ad-Din*, III, 773.
36. Ibn al-Shihna, *Al-durr*, 87.
37. Cf. Ibn al-Shihna, *Al-durr*, 87. The year given by Ibn Shaddad is 582/1186; this is clearly an error for 482/1089; cf. the short extract of the text edited by Sobernheim, 'Heiligtum', 383.
38. In 613/1216 a later mayor of Aleppo, Wali al-Din, removed the door with the name of Aq Sunqur on it and put his own name there instead; cf. Ibn al-Shihna, *Al-durr*, 87.
39. Ibn al-Shihna, *Al-durr*, 87.
40. Ibn al-Furat, *Ta'rikh*, ed. Elshayyal, 102. Ibn Abi Tayy reports that Zengi's capture of Aleppo was made possible by the citizens themselves who opened up the Iraq gate of the city for him.
41. Cf. Sibt b. al-'Ajami, *Kunuz*, 5; Ibn al-Shihna, *Al-durr*, 109.
42. Ibn al-Furat, *Ta'rikh*, ed. Elshayyal, 134–5.
43. Cf. the references given in C. Alptekin, *The Reign of Zangi* (*521–541/1127–1146*) (Erzerum, 1978), 50, 56, 60.
44. E. Combe, J. Sauvaget and G. Wiet (eds), *Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arabe*, VIII, *Années 485 à 550 de l'Hégire* (Cairo, 1937) [henceforth cited as *RCEA*], no. 3112, 229.

45. Presumably this word is an attempt in Arabic to represent 'Aq'.
46. Cf. Sobernheim, 'Heiligtum', 384–5; *RCEA*, no. 3112, 229–30.
47. Ibn al-'Adim gives the date of Thursday 10 Rabi' II 541/19 September 1146 for the date of the entry of Nur al-Din into Aleppo; cf. *Zubda*, ed. Zakkar, I, 472.
48. N. Elisséeff, 'Les monuments de Nur al-Din', *Bulletin des Études Orientales* XIII (1949– 51), 5–7; Sobernheim, using the evidence of Ibn Shaddad, 387.
49. Elshayyal, *Ibn al-Furat*, 350.
50. Abu Shama, *Kitab al-rawdatayn*, *RHC/HO*, IV, 17.
51. Ibn al-Shihna, *Al-durr*, 87; Ibn Shaddad, *Al-a'laq*, ed. Sobernheim, 383.
52. *RCEA*, no. 3128, 241; Ibn Shaddad, *Al-a'laq*, ed. Sobernheim, 386–7.
53. Cf. N. Elisséeff, 'La titulature de Nur al-Din d'après ses inscriptions', *Bulletin des Études Orientales* XIV (1952–4), 157.
54. Ibn al-Furat, *Ta'rikh*, ed. Elshayyal, 349–50.
55. Elisséeff, *Nur ad-Din*, II, 428–30.
56. El-Azhari, *Saljuqs*, 232.
57. Ibn al-Furat, *Ta'rikh*, ed. Elshayyal, 424–6.
58. One of the translators of the chronicle of Ibn al-Qalanisi, Le Tourneau, wrongly describes this formula as 'something special' for the Isma'ili call to prayer; cf. Ibn al-Qalanisi, *Dhayl ta'rikh Dimashq*, tr. R. Le Tourneau, *Damas de 1075 à 1154* (Damascus, 1952), 300, n. 1. In fact, all three major Shi'i groups – Imamis, Zaydis and Isma'ilis – agree on this formula; cf. I. K. A. Howard, 'The development of the *adhan* and *iqama* of the *salat* in early Islam', *Journal of Semitic Studies* XXVI/2 (Autumn 1981), 219.
59. Ibn al-Qalanisi, *Dhayl ta'rikh Dimashq*, ed. H. F. Amedroz (Leiden, 1908), 301. The Arabic text uses images of the sea: *haju lahu wa-maju*.
60. Ibn al-Qalanisi, *Dhayl*, ed. Amedroz, 301. The word *satwa* has within it the meaning of a violent and impetuous attack; cf. A. de Biberstein-Kazimirski: *Dictionnaire arabe-français* (Paris, 1860), I, 1090.
61. Sibt b. al-Jawzi: *Mir'at al-zaman fi ta'rikh al-a'yan*, ed. unidentified, 1 vol. in 2 parts (Hyderabad, Deccan, 1951), VIII/I, 199; this author repeats the information later under the obituaries of al-Balkhi (220) and of Nur al-Din himself (306).
62. Ibn al-'Adim, *Zubda*, ed. Zakkar, II, 475.
63. Ibn al-Qalanisi, *Dhayl*, tr. Le Tourneau, 300.
64. Elshayyal, *Ibn al-Furat*, 88. Mouton points out that the methods used by al-Balkhi to suppress the activities of the Twelvers in Damascus must have been effective in Aleppo too; cf. Mouton, *Damas*, 344.

65. Ibn al-ʿAdim, *Zubda*, ed. Zakkar, II, 475. Nur al-Din re-buried his father's remains under the northern portico of the Zajjajiyya; Sibt b. al-ʿAjami, *Kunuz*, 5.
66. Ibn al-Shihna, *Al-durr*, 120–1.
67. Eddé, 'Sources arabes', 300; Cahen, 'Chronique', 261.
68. Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, ed. Elshayyal, 424–6.
69. Sauvaget, *Alep*, 115, n. 361, quoting Ibn al-Furat, *Ta'rikh* (Vienna), MS. A. F. 118, III, f. 110r. Ibn al-Qalanisi dates this episode to the year 552/1157–8, reporting that the people of Aleppo asked the brother of Nur al-Din to reinstate the phrase 'Muhammad and 'Ali are the best of mankind' in the call to prayer; *Dhayl*, tr. Gibb, 342. The most detailed account of this episode is given by Sibt b. al-ʿAjami, *Kunuz*, 24–5.
70. Sibt b. al-ʿAjami, *Kunuz*, 25.
71. Sauvaget, *Alep*, 116.
72. Ibn al-Shihna, *Al-durr*, 58.
73. Ibn al-ʿAdim, *Bughya*, *RHC/HO*, III, 698.
74. Cahen comments that under the rule of Saladin's first two successors in Aleppo, Ibn Abi Tayy does not seem to have had reason to complain; cf. 'Chronique', 261.
75. M. Lyons and D. E. P. Jackson, *Saladin: The Politics of Holy War* (Cambridge, 1982), 56.
76. Ibn al-Athir, *RHC/HO*, I, 662.
77. Sobernheim, 'Heiligtum', 388.
78. Cf. Ibn al-Shihna, *Al-durr*, 88; Ibn Shaddad, *apud* Sobernheim, 388.
79. Jean Sauvaget, 'Deux sanctuaires chiites d'Alep', *Syria* IX (1928), 225. When Sauvaget saw the building in the 1920s there was an inscription on the rock with the names of the Twelve Imams on it.
80. For a discussion of the use made of earlier sources by later chroniclers, cf. C. Hillenbrand, 'Some mediaeval Islamic approaches to source material', *Oriens* 27–8 (1981), 197–225.

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15

A Short History of Jihad

Even before today, when Islam is hardly ever out of the news, there was a perception amongst non-Muslims, and especially Christians, that Islam is a religion of the sword. The lingering heritage of the Crusades has no doubt contributed to the formation of negative stereotypes and, as was clear after the events of 9/11, the words jihad and crusade are still omnipresent slogans, with deep resonances that are both religious and historical. Indeed, the term jihad is bandied about in the world's non-Muslim media, almost without ever being defined; the same imprecision characterises the use of its derivatives like jihadi, jihadists and *mujahidin*. But serious debates in academic circles, both Muslim and non-Muslim, have revolved around defining jihad. Is it a constant doctrine, unchanging throughout time and space, enshrined in the Islamic canonical sources, or something altogether more fluid, which has evolved and been adapted to specific historical situations? Predictably, there is a whole spectrum of opinions about this. Similarly, the issue of the two kinds or dimensions of jihad – the greater jihad, which is the struggle for personal spiritual improvement, and the lesser jihad, which is a military struggle against infidels – is open to differing interpretations. Ultimately, the position remains that jihad is a nuanced and complex concept; Islamic history shows this very clearly.[1]

What, then, is the aim of this chapter on jihad in history? Certainly not to present a dry excursus on a dead past, and if readers take away nothing else from what follows, they should at least take away a warning. Medieval history is much more relevant in the Middle East today than it is in the West. And Islamic law is constantly being finessed by memories of what happened in

the distant past. Thus, treatments of jihad anchored only in the present and conceived in political terms are simplistic, two-dimensional and therefore flawed. Far too much of modern discourse in the media is of this type.

This chapter will begin by dealing, though only briefly, with jihad in theory, before moving on to discuss some select examples of how jihad was practised in the past, so as to illustrate the diversity, versatility and durability of this concept. These variations should emphasise the likelihood that today too the practice of jihad, even in a world dominated by globalisation and the internet, is not the same everywhere and cannot be reduced to one simple template.

Jihad in Theory

The Qur'an is a book of spiritual revelation, not a legal treatise presented systematically. Since early times, Qur'anic commentators, in their attempts to understand and explain the meanings and ambiguities of the Holy Book, have linked certain verses to specific events in the Prophet's life. This approach is enlightening in the context of what the Qur'an says about jihad. After all, while proclaiming an eternal message for all people in all times and places, the Qur'an also mirrors the evolution of Muhammad's career. Revelations from God came to him in times of crisis. At the beginning, whilst he was in Mecca, his jihad *fi sabil Allah* (his 'struggle in the path of God') was against the forces of polytheism in the hearts of his fellow Meccans. But already in Mecca his life was in danger. After the *hijra* (emigration) to Medina in 622 physical fighting became a pressing issue. Muhammad was building a new theocratic social order there, based on the principles of Islam, and he had to struggle against enemies both inside and outside the city. Above all, the Meccans wanted him dead and they sent armies to attack him; the new faith had to be defended by force.

Non-Muslims, and especially Christians who have before them the model of Jesus, 'the Prince of Peace', find it difficult to accept the idea of a 'warrior prophet'. Yet the Old Testament, which also forms part of the Christian Bible, contains such famous examples as Moses and Joshua, Jewish prophets who were sent by God to preach His monotheistic message to unbelieving peoples and who fought to preserve the religion of Abraham and God's people. Muhammad was well aware of this ancient Semitic religious tradition

of fighting. But within his own tribal society in Arabia, too, tribal raiding and fighting had been part of the struggle for survival in an extremely harsh physical environment since time immemorial. However, Muslims believe that the difference between the traditional fighting between warring tribes in Arabia and Muhammad's own military struggle is that his striving had a religious dimension. It was in the path of God and it was therefore jihad.

Most references in the Qur'an to jihad (striving) stress the greater jihad and only a few allude to a military struggle against those who oppose Islam. It should also be noted that Paradise is the reward for all those who believe and perform good deeds, whether or not they die striving in the path of God.

The Qur'an mirrors the vicissitudes experienced by the fledgling Muslim community. At first, God permits the believers to fight in order to defend themselves, but not to initiate military conflict. Later, the tone becomes more aggressive, commanding the faithful to kill idolaters if they do not submit to Islam. It is not surprising that in the polytheistic milieu of seventh-century Arabia the Muslims were soon faced with the need to use force on occasion to defend their fragile little community. If they had not done so, it is doubtful that Islam would have survived at all.

The books of Hadith (the sayings of Muhammad) – collected by Sunnis, Shi'ites, Sufis and others – amplify Qur'anic pronouncements about jihad and reveal the clear aim of the early Muslims: to lay down detailed rules for the proper conduct of jihad, especially on subjects such as the treatment of prisoners and the avoidance of killing innocent non-combatants.

According to the medieval Muslim religious scholars who formulated the Shari'a in the eighth and ninth centuries, the whole world is divided into two camps: the Abode of Islam (*Dar al-Islam*) and the Abode of War (*Dar al-Harb*). The Abode of Islam referred to all lands under Muslim control. The Abode of War comprised all the lands outside the Abode of Islam. Theoretically, jihad against such areas should continue until the whole world belongs to Islam. Only the leader of the community, the imam or caliph, could call for and lead the jihad, which is the collective duty of the whole community. After the ninth century some scholars began to recognise a third status, the Abode of Truce (*Dar al-'Ahd*), meaning territories that had entered into a contract of specified duration with the Muslim community.[2]

Over the centuries the theory of jihad was modified in other ways. Just

as the ideal of crusade against the infidel was sullied by the infamous Fourth Crusade in which European Christians fought against eastern Christians in Constantinople in 1204, so too in due course Sunni Muslim lawyers permitted jihad against Shi'ites and other so-called Muslim heretics, as well as against rebels and apostates.

Medieval Jihad in Practice

As might be expected, the history of the Islamic world and its relations with its non-Muslim neighbours was by no means one of continuous jihad as the law books prescribed. There were in fact long periods of peace which allowed social, commercial and cultural contact with the infidel 'Other'. Nevertheless, Islamic history is punctuated by famous jihad campaigns; and the memory of some of them still resonates.

It is convenient to begin with the Arab conquests. The Arab armies, flooding out of their remote desert homeland in large numbers for the first time in their history, had by 732 conquered a vast empire that stretched from Spain to northern India and the borders of China. Much ink has been spilt on the phenomenon of the Muslim conquests and why they happened when they did. Some scholars have tried to prove that these conquests might have happened regardless of the influence of Islam, that they were primarily driven by climatic and socio-economic factors. Others have argued that the instrument of jihad was used to drive forward the recently converted Arabs and to establish Islam as the prevailing faith in the newly conquered lands. After all, such scholars argue, Islam was for the whole world, not just for Arabs.[3]

So what role, if any, did jihad play in this extraordinary phenomenon? The timing of the conquests is extremely telling. They took off in an enormous surge immediately after the death of Muhammad in 632. Although it is unlikely that the rank and file of the Bedouin Arab troops were already imbued with the spirit of jihad, it is probable that the inner circle of devoted followers of the Prophet were so inspired. Success led to success for the Arab armies, and their confidence that God's favour was with them increased exponentially.

On balance it seems hard to deny that the impetus of jihad played a key role in the early Arab military successes and that it gave them an ideological edge over their foes. Without this impetus the achievements of the Muslims

would have been ephemeral and localised. Islam, as practised by those who had been privileged to work close to Muhammad, provided the foundation of the embryonic Arab state; it was the jihad of this small elite that fired the early conquests.

The next example comes from two centuries later and a world far removed from Arabia, namely Central Asia. This was a key frontier to defend, for it marked the border between the territory of Islam and that of the nomadic Turks. The Turks had lived in the vast steppes of Central Asia for millennia; in the tenth century they were wedged between the Abode of Islam, with its major cities, Bukhara and Samarkand, and the Chinese, who had built the Great Wall to keep them out. The easternmost Muslim state in the tenth century was ruled by the ethnically Persian Samanid dynasty. By virtue of their geographical position, these staunchly Sunni rulers inherited the crucial role of defenders of the eastern frontier.[4]

Medieval Muslim geographers have left detailed descriptions of this frontier against the infidel Turks. They speak of vast numbers of buildings known as *ribat*s (fortifications).[5] Russian archaeologists have excavated many such monuments. These structures, part military camp, part Sufi cloister, were built to house warriors, known as *mujahidin* or *ghazi*s, who flocked to this area from all across the Islamic world to wage jihad against the infidels. The modern implications of this practice will not escape even casual observers.

A third example is that of the Ghaznavid Turks who present a rather different example of medieval jihad. With the advent of this aggressive Sunni Muslim state based at Ghazna in southern Afghanistan from 977, the Hindu rulers in north-west India were soon under threat. Northern India proved to be a perfect place in which to conduct raids. Although Muslim warriors found Buddhism rather difficult to categorise, they experienced no such problem with Hinduism. The Hindu idols seemed to them clear evidence of polytheism. Between 999 and 1027 the most famous Ghaznavid ruler, Mahmud, raided northern India fifteen times. These raids were retrospectively designated as jihad campaigns by court historians, but their real motive seems to have been booty. Indeed, Mahmud destroyed what he regarded as idolatrous works of art and in the process acquired vast riches from the Indian princes. Nevertheless, he is celebrated in Muslim legend to this day as a *mujahid* fighting the infidel.[6]

So much for the evidence from the Muslim East. What of the Muslim West? The eleventh-century Almoravid dynasty was the first of two Berber tribal confederations that took power in North Africa and conquered parts of Muslim Spain.[7] The jihad ideology that motivated the Almoravids is demonstrated in their very name – al-Murabitun – literally 'those who live in *ribat*s'. Their founder, Ibn Yasin, was a strict Maliki Sunni Muslim and he preached a militant jihad ideology to the veiled Sanhaja Berbers in the High Atlas Mountains, founding a *ribat* near the mouth of the Senegal river. Ibn Yasin and his followers overran the regions of the Sahara until his death 'as a martyr' in 1058. He was succeeded as leader by Yusuf b. Tashufin (1061–1107) who seized substantial parts of North Africa, founded a new capital city, Marrakesh, and invaded Muslim Spain. The Almoravids proclaimed their activities to be jihad, both against the pagans of Africa, and, perhaps more surprisingly, against the Muslims of North Africa and Spain, whose adherence to Islam they viewed as lukewarm and who, they believed, were in need of 're-Islamisation'. Their reforms had a character that might strike us as puritan, with their hatred of all luxuries and of dancing, music and poetry, and their intolerance of other interpretations of Islam. Again, modern parallels spring to mind.

And now to Syria, and the particular case of Sayf al-Dawla, seen by posterity as a jihad martyr. On the Muslim border with Byzantium in what is now eastern Turkey, this very famous Syrian Shiʿite scion of the Hamdanid dynasty (who ruled 944–67) conducted annual campaigns of jihad against the Byzantine Christians.[8] As in Central Asia, Muslim warriors for the faith on the Byzantine border were housed in *ribat*s, supported by charitable donations. Sayf al-Dawla (the 'Sword of the State'), as his name denotes, fought in a spirit of jihad more than forty battles against the Byzantines across the border from his little state centred at Aleppo. Bedridden from 962, he would be carried into battle on a litter, and when he died, he was buried like a true martyr (*shahid*); a brick laden with dust from one of his campaigns was put under his cheek in his mausoleum. Poets[9] and preachers praised his jihad and the inspiring example of Sayf al-Dawla was not forgotten when the Muslims of Syria and Palestine were facing the Crusaders.[10]

The somewhat parallel cases of the early Muslim Kharijites and the much later so-called 'Assassins' highlight what might be termed, somewhat anach-

ronistically perhaps, 'medieval terrorism'; but whereas there is evidence that the Kharijites saw themselves as fighting jihad, the Arabic or Persian sources rarely mention the term jihad in connection with the 'Assassins'.

Within thirty years of Muhammad's death in 632, the young Muslim community saw the appearance of a marginal breakaway group known as the Kharijites (the 'Dissenters'). Their name came from the Arabic verb *kharaja* meaning 'to go out' or, by extension, 'to rebel'. The Kharijites were implacable foes of any Muslim government other than their own. Theirs was the 'saved community'.[11] They believed in the theocratic slogan: 'Rule belongs to God alone.' They adopted a strict view of Islam, based on the belief that the most *virtuous* person in the community should lead it, not necessarily someone from the Prophet's own family or someone elected by the whole community. The Kharijites went further than that, saying that anyone who did not share their beliefs was *not* a Muslim and should be killed. One section of them believed that the killing of non-Kharijite women and children – that is, non-combatants – was also permissible. The site of the true faith (*Dar al-Hijra*) – the Abode of Emigration – was their army camp, and the rest of the world was the Abode of Polytheism.

This fierce, uncompromising sectarian group undertook a campaign of murders of leading figures, such as Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law 'Ali, the fourth caliph, and they were persecuted by the early caliphs for some two centuries. The early Kharijites were drawn largely from Arab tribes with a long tradition of reciting poetry. But Kharijite poetry no longer extols tribal virtues; it preaches messages of jihad. These poets praise the courage and piety of their comrades who have fallen in the path of God on the battlefield and they berate themselves for not having died as martyrs too. For Kharijite fighters, death does not bring absolute despair; indeed, it is only the entrance to Paradise, where they will meet again their brothers who have preceded them there. The Kharijite warrior does not wish to die in his bed; he hopes for violent death under the point of the lance. By day, we read in their poetry, the fighters are lions in battle; by night they pray like sobbing women at funerals.[12]

In the last decade of the eleventh century another group of 'extremists' appeared, this time in north-west Iran, namely the breakaway sect known by their Sunni Muslim foes and later, in Syria and Palestine, by their

Crusader enemies as the Hashishiyyun (the 'hashish eaters', popularly called the Assassins). Hasan-i Sabbah, the Persian founder of this extreme Isma'ili Shi'ite group, normally known in medieval Muslim sources as the Nizaris or the Batinis, taught a form of Islam which he termed 'new preaching' (*da'wa jadida*); this stressed the necessity of a charismatic imam to interpret true Islamic doctrine for the whole Muslim community.[13] What proved more significant, however, was the programme of politically motivated assassination campaigns that he organised to bring down the rule of the Seljuq Turks in Iran. Indeed, in the space of just under thirty years (1095–1124), the Assassins, under Hasan's orders, carried out a series of around fifty high-profile murders. Their victims were always Sunni government ministers of the Seljuq Turkish state or important military or religious figures. The murders were deliberately conducted in the full glare of publicity, often in the courtyard of the mosque on Fridays. The Assassins worked in pairs, used ritual daggers and were prepared to die if necessary to carry out their task. Contrary to what is often said today, however, the Assassins did not actively seek death – they were not, so to speak, medieval 'suicide bombers'.[14] A number of them are recorded as having escaped after carrying out the murders.[15] But there is no doubt that these high-profile murders gave the Assassins a psychological impact out of all proportion to their numbers.

As for the Nizaris of Syria, whose most famous leader Rashid al-Din Sinan (d.1192) was popularly known as the Old Man of the Mountain (Shaykh al-Jabal), they were held responsible for the killing or wounding of both Crusader and Sunni Muslim leaders. According to a single reference – in a rare but much later Isma'ili work, dated 1324, written by a Syrian Isma'ili called Abu Firas – Rashid al-Din sent out men of jihad (*rijal al-jihad*) on assassination expeditions.[16]

The twelfth to fourteenth centuries saw the coming of the Crusades and the Mongol invasions, and these events triggered a reawakening of jihad. Two key moments in the history of jihad occurred in close succession when the Muslim world was attacked from both west and east, not on its frontiers but in its very heartlands, first by the Crusaders from Christian Europe and then by the pagan Mongol hordes from the very borders of China. In both cases the Muslim world eventually managed to get rid of these two external threats by mounting focused campaigns of jihad.

It is the Crusades that give the clearest demonstration of this process. The First Crusade arrived in Syria in 1098 at a time of extreme Muslim weakness and disunity. Moreover, Muslims in this region had long coexisted with their powerful Christian neighbour, Byzantium. In such an atmosphere, they were simply not ready to wage immediate jihad against the incoming Crusaders.

So the Crusaders easily seized Jerusalem in 1099 and had set up three more Crusader states by 1110. And it took the Muslims well over fifty years to find the right kind of military leadership and the ideological motivation necessary to recover the initiative against the Crusaders and to undertake the re-conquest of long-held Muslim territory. In vain did a Muslim jurist from Damascus called al-Sulami write in his *Book of Jihad* in 1105 that there was still time to remove the Crusaders; his voice went unheard.[17] It was only in the 1150s that the tide began to turn with a remarkable surge of jihad, masterminded by an alliance between the Sunni religious classes in Syria and the Turkish warlord, Nur al-Din (d. 1174).[18] His successor in leading the jihad, the more famous Saladin, was able to re-conquer Jerusalem, the third holiest city in Islam after Mecca and Medina. Indeed, Jerusalem provided a unique focus for the jihad of these two great Muslim military leaders, and the medieval Muslim chronicles portray both Nur al-Din and Saladin as figures in whom personal spiritual jihad and public jihad against the infidel were inextricably combined.

During the Crusading period the Muslim leadership in Syria used a wide range of methods to keep the ardour of the faithful for jihad at a high level. This called for careful orchestration on a scale unparalleled in earlier times. Monumental inscriptions on public buildings, for example, harped on jihad themes and were so placed as to be legible.[19] Nur al-Din sponsored jihad books, jihad sermons, collections of jihad *hadith*,[20] works praising the merits of Jerusalem and rousing jihad poetry.[21] The longer Jerusalem remained in Crusader hands, with its two sacred Islamic monuments, the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque, occupied by the infidel, the more the Muslims longed to take the Holy City back. And Saladin's victory over the Crusaders at the battle of Hattin in 1187 and his triumphal entry into Jerusalem that same year, on the anniversary of the Prophet Muhammad's ascent into heaven from that very city, were the crowning moments of his jihad.

The case of the Mongols is not so clear-cut. The significance of the Mongol invasions for the development of jihad has been somewhat overlooked, for it has been eclipsed by the impact of the Crusades. However, through the writings of the influential Hanbalite Sunni scholar, Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328), the effect of the devastating Mongol irruption into the heartlands of Islam under Genghis Khan and his successors can be seen as seminal in any overview of medieval jihad.[22] More so than the threat of more Crusades from Europe, the Mongol invasions – which destroyed Baghdad and the 'Abbasid caliphate – dominated the life and thinking of Ibn Taymiyyah. He has constituted a role model for the movement begun by Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, as well as for modern Wahhabism, and for many so-called jihadist groups today. In his three, so-called 'anti-Mongol' fatwas,[23] Ibn Taymiyyah records with great vehemence the horrors of two Mongol invasions of Syria during 1299 to 1301. At no point does he accept that the Mongols are Muslims, even though the Mongol ruler Ghazan publicly converted to Islam in 1295. He argues that the Mongols do not follow Shari'a, thus obliging Muslims to wage jihad against them. To persuade those Muslims who were hesitant to take up arms against the Mongols, Ibn Taymiyyah likens the Mongols to the Kharijites.[24]

Instead of the overwhelming preoccupation with jihad focused on Jerusalem which characterised Saladin's time, for Ibn Taymiyyah a century and a half later jihad was aimed at preempting external military aggression against the House of Islam. But he also argued that it was necessary in a much more profound sense to wage the greater jihad and to purge Muslim society of the spiritual defilement caused by contact with non-Muslims, especially Christians and Mongols.[25] That sense of defilement, of religious pollution caused by infidels, is alive and well among many *mujahidin* today.

These varied but interrelated case studies point to the availability of a historical reservoir upon which modern ideologists of jihad can draw in the twenty-first century.

Jihad in Recent Times

Western imperialism, colonialism and foreign occupation since the nineteenth century have provoked jihad movements in many parts of the Muslim world. For some, the call for jihad has a specific nationalist focus, such as the

ongoing Palestine/Israel problem. Other groups have resorted to terrorist acts across the whole world under the banner of jihad in protest against Western, and especially US, interventionism. Crusade/jihad imagery has often surfaced in the twentieth-century writings of Sayyid Qutb, Abu al-Aʿla Mawdudi and others. More recently, the self-styled *mujtahid* (interpreter of legal texts), Osama bin Laden, delivered fatwas and referred in his speeches and letters to jihad against Jews and Crusaders. The juxtaposition of crusade/jihad continues apace, as in the hotel bomb blasts in Jakarta in 2009 or the ongoing suicide operations against the Iraqi and Afghan regimes that are deemed puppets of the so-called Zionist–Crusader alliance. The theme of Jerusalem is often repeated by spokesmen from jihadi groups and in the rhetoric of some Muslim governments. Khomeini was fully behind the concept of an anti-Zionist jihad to liberate Jerusalem, a theme that recurred in Ahmadinejad's speeches. Saladin's jihad has been viewed as a blueprint for anti-Western struggle, as banknotes, postage stamps, posters and websites attest.[26]

Other medieval jihad motifs also recur. The rhetoric of Osama bin Laden and others was directed against the 'paganism' of the West, recalling Ibn Taymiyyah's tirades against the Mongols. The 'proto-terrorist' group mentioned earlier, the Kharijites, also figured in bin Laden's manifestos – he cited Kharijite poetry[27] – and, in operations such as 9/11, al-Qaeda, like the Assassins, adopted the strategy of committing violent murder in high-profile locations to attract maximum publicity.[28] Nowadays, there are thousands of websites about the Assassins. Very few, if any, of those responsible for them have any knowledge of the religious beliefs of this group; instead, they prefer to indulge in the kind of pseudo-mysticism that also surrounds the medieval Knights Templar on the internet. One Assassin website even has a picture of the Assassin leader, Hasan-i Sabbah, placed next to Osama bin Laden. Both men are made to look very much like each other, despite the wide difference in their religious beliefs; bin Laden was a Sunni and Hasan an Ismaʿili Shiʿite.[29] Moreover, unlike the campaigns of bin Laden, the killings carried out by Hasan were aimed at single individuals, whereas those of bin Laden were focused on mass murder.

Al-Qaeda and the numerous copycat groups that it has spawned across the world deploy a highly simplistic and eclectic interpretation of jihad.

They are an elusive formation. Their weapons include terrorism and exemplary violence that resonates around the world. The jihadists' 'martyrdom' is amplified because it is splashed all over the internet. They claim to be waging global jihad against the West. But what is today's jihad? The world's Muslim communities hold a broad spectrum of beliefs on this topic. For the vast majority, however, their views are based on a doctrine of jihad that has been laboriously refined by many generations of scholars, Sunni and Shiʿite, modernist and traditionalist. Can this venerable edifice created by Islamic legal scholarship be overturned by any upstart warlord and terrorist with no recognised religious or legal credentials? It seems so. Research conducted in Washington in the last decade concluded that only 7 per cent of the world's Muslims are 'politically radicalised'.[30] But it is precisely the voices of those radical groups that are the ones that are picked up and spread round the world by the media. How can the indiscriminate slaughter of the innocent on 9/11, 7/7 or the dates of other so-called jihad-motivated attacks, conducted not on the battlefield but in airports, shopping malls or train stations, legitimately be called 'jihad in the path of God'? Yet the French-Algerian 'jihadist' Mohammed Merah, perpetrator of the Toulouse killings in March 2012, publicly declared: 'I fight for Allah.' Likewise, two British Muslims of Nigerian descent proclaimed '*Allahu Akbar*' as they butchered a young British soldier on a London street in May 2013.

We are now used to movements all over the world whose names include the terms jihad or *mujahidin* – in Indonesia, Mali, Chechnya, Nigeria, Afghanistan, France, the UK, the USA, to name but a few of the countries affected. Clearly, by giving such prominence to the doctrine of jihad, the members of such groups are placing it at the very heart of their activities. And the word has acquired new usages. Proponents of 'consumer jihad' issue fatwas which focus on economic boycotts, as in the example of Danish butter in 2006. The notorious Danish cartoons infamously included a picture of the Prophet Muhammad wearing a turban in the shape of a ticking bomb on which was written the Islamic profession of faith. The news of the cartoons reverberated around the world and reignited old tensions in areas such as Nigeria.

The derivative term 'McJihad' has been coined to denote alliances in recent years between the USA (the home of the McDonald's empire) and oil-

rich conservative Muslim states.[31] To this list we may now add 'cyber jihad', which can be waged by hacking into the computers of individual citizens, and indeed those of government departments and agencies, with defensive or hostile intent.

Nowadays, of course, jihad is an overused word; but it can serve as a powerful rallying cry against perceived forces of aggression and interference. And the broad spectrum of meanings accommodated under that convenient umbrella term means that this process will continue and expand. This chapter has shown that it is a serious error to treat jihad simplistically, as a monolithic concept or rigidly defined category of actions. Fighting for widely differing aims and in sharply varied contexts was dressed up retrospectively in jihad rhetoric by medieval Muslim historians. And that same process continues today.

The past is not 'another country' for modern Muslims. And indeed certain aspects of medieval jihad that recur nowadays, sometimes under a slightly different guise, should be emphasised with that in mind. This historical dimension is frequently overlooked in modern discussions of jihad; hence my emphasis on it in this prologue. The model of the military campaigns of the Prophet Muhammad is never forgotten in modern jihad discourse. Of great importance too have been the famous battles of the early Arab conquests, such as Qadisiyya, and Saladin's victories against the Crusaders. The twelfth-century proponents of jihad used the full range of propaganda devices available at the time; their modern descendants of course have a much wider panoply of options – radio, television, newspapers, posters, the internet, social media and so on. But the underlying aim is much the same. Similarly, such medieval manifestations of jihad activity as high-profile killings, the flocking of Muslims from distant lands to the battlefields of jihad, the puritanical attitudes of many *mujahidin* and even (as practised on occasion by the early Kharijites) the targeting of non-combatants, such as women and children – all these aspects of medieval jihad have their modern counterparts. This is no mere coincidence.

Jihad continues to be a multivalent symbol; indeed, today's jihadis, unlike those in the Middle Ages, have dared to deploy the term *istishhad* (seeking martyrdom) to a context of suicide bombing. But that is quite another matter and it needs to be dealt with by the learned muftis and

shaykhs who interpret the precepts of Islamic law and faith for today's Muslims.

Notes

1. See, for example, A. Noth, *Heiliger Krieg und Heiliger Kampf* (Bonn, 1986); R. Firestone, *Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam* (New York, 1999); M. Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practice* (Princeton, 2006); D. Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (Berkeley, 2005); C. J. van der Krogt, 'Jihad without apologetics', *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations* 21/2 (2010), 127–42.
2. See M. Khadduri, *The Law of War and Peace in Islam* (London, 1940).
3. For an excellent treatment of this much-discussed topic, see H. Kennedy, *The Great Arab Conquests: How the Spread of Islam Changed the World We Live In* (London, 2007).
4. See L. Treadwell, 'The account of the Samanid dynasty in Ibn Zafir al-Azdi's *Akhbar al-duwal al-munqati'a*', *Iran* 43 (2005), 135–71.
5. See Abu Bakr Muhammad b. Ja'far Narshakhi, *The History of Bukhara*, tr. R. N. Frye (Cambridge, MA, 1954), 18; S. P. Tolstow, *Auf den Spuren der altchoresmischen Kultur*, tr. O. Mehlitz (Berlin, 1953), 267.
6. C. E. Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids: Their Empire in Afghanistan and Eastern Iran 994–1040* (Edinburgh, 1963).
7. See D. Lange, 'The Almoravid expansion and the downfall of Ghana', *Der Islam* 73 (1996), 122–59; R. A. Messier, *Almoravids and the Meanings of Jihad* (Santa Barbara, 2010).
8. M. Canard, *Histoire de la dynastie des Hamdanides de Jazira et de Syrie*, vol. I (Paris, 1953).
9. See R. Blachère, *Un Poète Arabe du IVe Siècle de l'Hégire* (*Xe siècle de J.-C.*) (Paris, 1935); R. Blachère, 'La vie et l'oeuvre d'Abu Tayyib al-Mutanabbi', in R. Blachere, *Analecta* (Damascus, 1975), 401–30; A. Hamori, *The Composition of Mutanabbi's Panegyrics to Sayf al-Dawla* (Leiden, 1992); C. Hillenbrand, 'Jihad poetry in the age of the Crusades', in T. Madden, J. L. Naus and V. Ryan (eds), *Crusades – Medieval Worlds in Conflict: Proceedings of the Crusades Conference Held at the University of St Louis, 2007* (Aldershot, 2010), 10–12.
10. Abu Tayyib al-Mutanabbi, *Al-Mutanabbi carmina cum commentario Wahidii*, ed. F. Dieterici (Berlin, 1856–61), 481–4.
11. See Nasir b. Sulayman b. Sa'id al-Sabi'i, *Al-Khawarij wa'l-Haqiqa al-Gha'iba* (Muscat, 1420/1999); W. Madelung, *Religious Trends in Early Islamic Iran* (Albany, 1988), 54–5; P. L. Heck, 'Eschatological scripturalism and the end of

community: The case of early Kharijism', *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 7 (2005), 137–52.

12. See F. Gabrieli, 'La poesia harigita nel secolo degli Omayyadi', *Rivista degli studi orientali* 20 (1943), 331–72; F. Gabrieli, 'Religious poetry in early Islam', *Arabic Poetry: Theory and Development. Third Giorgio della Vida Conference* (Wiesbaden, 1973), 5–17; I. 'Abbas, *Diwan Shi'r al-Khawarij* (Beirut and Cairo, 1982); A. Knysh, 'Kharijis', 'Kharijite literature', *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Literature* (London, 1998), vol. 2, 436–7.
13. See Madelung, 'Isma'ilism: the old and the new *da'wa*', in *Religious Trends*, 93–105; see also the classic work on this still little-known subject – M. G. S. Hodgson, *The Secret Order of Assassins: The Struggle of the Early Nizari Isma'ilis against the Islamic World* (reprint) (Philadelphia, 2005).
14. See the discussion in C. Hillenbrand, 'Unholy aspirations: Review of Richard Bonney', *Jihad: From Qur'an to bin Laden* (London, 2004), and F. Devji, *Landscapes of the Jihad: Militancy, Morality, Modernity* (London, 2005); *The Times Literary Supplement*, 4 August 2006.
15. Hodgson mentions the widespread story of a mother who grieved when her son had not died in an assassination attack but had come home alive; Hodgson, *The Secret Order of Assassins*, 83.
16. For this rare source see S. Guyard, 'Un grand maître des Assassins au temps de Saladin', *Journal Asiatique*, 7th Series: 9 (1877), 324–489.
17. See E. Sivan, *L'Islam et la Croisade: Idéologie et Propagande dans les Réactions Musulmanes aux Croisades* (Paris, 1968), 30–2.
18. Ibid., 59–91; C. Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (Edinburgh, 1999), 117–70.
19. C. Hillenbrand, 'Aspects of *jihad* propaganda: the evidence of 12th century inscriptions', in *Proceedings of the Conference on the History of the Crusades, University of Bir Zeit* (Bir Zeit, 1993), 53–63.
20. The famous Damascene scholar, Ibn 'Asakir, wrote a work entitled *The Forty Hadiths for Inciting Jihad* at the request of his patron Nur al-Din; see S. A. Mourad and J. E. Lindsay, *The Intensification and Reorientation of Sunni Jihad Ideology in the Crusader Period: Ibn 'Asakir of Damascus (1105–1176) and His Age, with an Edition and Translation of Ibn 'Asakir's The Forty Hadiths for Inciting Jihad* (Leiden and Boston, 2013).
21. Hillenbrand, 'Jihad poetry', 14–17.
22. See H. Laoust, 'La biographie d'Ibn Taimiya d'après Ibn Kathir', *Bulletin d'études orientales* 9 (1942), 115–62.

23. D. Aigle, 'The Mongol invasions of Bilad al-Sham by Ghazan Khan and Ibn Taymiyah's three "anti-Mongol" fatwas', *Mamluk Studies Review* 11/2 (2007), 89–120.
24. Aigle, 'The Mongol invasions', 103.
25. A. Morabia, 'Ibn Taymiyya, dernier grand théoricien du jihad médiéval', *Bulletin d'études orientales* 30/2 (1978), 85–99.
26. See Hillenbrand, *The Crusades*, 594–600; C. Hillenbrand, 'The legacy of the Crusades', in T. Madden (ed.), *Crusades: The Illustrated History* (London, 2004), 208–9; A.-M. Eddé, *Saladin* (Paris, 2008), 576–9.
27. For example, in one of his speeches Osama bin Laden quoted a rousing jihad poem by the seventh-century poet, al-Tirrima al-Ta'i.
28. *Jay Nelson's Weird Load Article Archive*, 'Curse of the assassins: Part 1, the prototype of terror', n.d., available at <http://archives.weirdload.com/hasan.html> (last accessed 27 December 2013); J. Mackinlay, 'Tackling bin Laden: lessons from history', *The Observer*, 28 October 2001.
29. *Jay Nelson's Weird Load Article Archive*, 'Curse of the assassins'.
30. J. L. Esposito and D. Mogahed, *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Think* (New York, 2007).
31. T. Mitchell, 'Islam in the U.S. global order', *Social Text* 73 (Winter 2003), 1–18 (3).

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16

Muslim Jerusalem, the Crusades and the Career of Saladin

To medieval Jews, Christians and Muslims alike, the Holy Land was a deeply symbolic and sacred entity, not just a geographical area of the Middle East. For all three Abrahamic faiths, the focus was above all on Jerusalem. For Muslims, Jerusalem, with the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, was considered to be the third most holy site worldwide, after Mecca and Medina, and for them it was a magnet of pious visitation. Moreover, Islam has further direct links with the Holy Land; Jerusalem was the first Islamic direction of prayer, and Muslims believe that the Prophet Muhammad was carried up from Jerusalem on his night Journey (*mi'raj*) into Heaven. For them, it is in Jerusalem that the Day of Judgement will take place.

Muslim Attitudes to Jerusalem under Crusader Rule

The Crusades, as viewed by Western Christendom, were a series of at least eight military campaigns against the Muslims of Syria, Palestine and Egypt. Their initial impetus was to protect the holy places of the Christian Near East, but especially Jerusalem. The Crusader presence in the Middle East lasted from 1098 to 1291. The onslaught of the First Crusade came like a bolt from the blue. It was quite unprecedented. When the Crusaders approached Jerusalem for the first time in 1099, they were imbued with religious zeal, and the words of Pope Urban II, who had called them to arms, resonated in their ears: 'May you deem it a beautiful thing to die for Christ in that city in which he died for us.'

The Levantine Muslims were deeply shocked by the brutality inflicted by the Crusaders when they captured Jerusalem. They had little idea of who

their attackers were or why they had come. Even allowing for the rhetoric and exaggeration aroused by feelings of grief and humiliation, the Muslim accounts of the fall of Jerusalem bear witness to terrible destruction and bloodshed. The Muslim chronicler Ibn Muyassar (d. 1278) records laconically that the Crusaders destroyed shrines, killed nearly all the city's inhabitants, burned copies of the Qur'an, and stole gold and silver candelabra from the Dome of the Rock. Indeed, all Muslim accounts express shock, horror and bewilderment at the wholesale massacre of Muslims and Jews at the hands of the victorious Crusaders. Contemporary poets wrote moving lines about the fall of Jerusalem, their voices 'choked with tears' and their hearts 'torn with affliction and love'. The brutal conduct of the invading Franks, as the Muslims called the Crusaders, is described with the symbolism of filth and desecration. They were viewed as polluters and invaders, jeopardising the sanctity of Islamic religious sacred space.

Jerusalem became a Christian city and for the first time since the reign of King Herod it was a capital city. The conquering Crusaders transformed it into the centre of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem. For eighty-eight years the gilded top of the Dome of the Rock, the most visible monument in Jerusalem, was surmounted by a cross. In the twelfth century, Jerusalem, transformed beyond all recognition by scores of brand-new Christian monuments, boasted perhaps the most intensively sacralised square mile in the medieval Christian world. Now lost to the Muslims, it became the focus of overwhelming longing to them. As the century progressed, the shame of Jerusalem being occupied by the Franks must have become increasingly difficult to endure. Like the Children of Israel by the waters of Babylon, the Muslims of Syria and Palestine grieved for the sites of the Holy City. It simply had to be retaken, and the hitherto dormant spirit of jihad, revivified through an alliance between the ruling Turkish and Kurdish warlords and the religious classes of Syria, was focused, not on the borders of Islam, but right within the Islamic world, on the city of Jerusalem itself. In the twelfth century the Muslim concept of jihad was given an unprecedentedly tangible focus. To recapture Jerusalem was a task tailor-made for jihad and the pursuit of this goal gave the Muslims an undoubted ideological edge over their opponents in the years leading up to the re-conquest of the Holy City in 1187. This programme of jihad propaganda, focused on Jerusalem, sponsoring new

religious colleges (madrasas) and writing jihad sermons, letters and poetry, proved to be a model for the dissemination of jihad which has probably never been matched.

The *Merits of Jerusalem* Literature

During the first and major period of Crusader occupation of Jerusalem (1099–1187), a genre of religious writing, the *Fada'il al-Quds* (*Merits of Jerusalem*) books, already some two centuries old, flourished mightily. This literature is little known in the West. The earliest complete surviving *Fada'il* treatise is that of al-Wasiti (dated 1020) but as the genre burgeoned dramatically it became a powerful tool in the spiritual and military jihad ideology aimed increasingly at the re-conquest of Jerusalem. Almost all the compilers of such works came from the Holy Land and Syria. Muslim reverence for Jerusalem was linked to Muhammad. These books contain little or no comment by the compiler. They consist of quotations from Muhammad's canonical sayings (*hadith*) or those attributed to his companions, other early Muslim saintly figures, or pre-Islamic prophets. These sources emphasise the superiority of prayer and pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the special value for a Muslim to die in Jerusalem, and the connection of the city with the Day of Judgement. The format of these books changed very little over four centuries. Despite their inherent conservatism, however, these works were also influenced by Judaeo-Christian themes. One such book includes traditions about Abraham's attempted sacrifice of Isaac, whilst the work of al-Wasiti alludes to Jesus driving the money changers out of the Temple.

During the career of Saladin's famous predecessor, Nur al-Din (d. 1174), the Muslim campaign to liberate Jerusalem used the *Merits of Jerusalem* works as a weapon. They were read out publicly to large audiences from 1160 onwards and helped to build up the expectation that the Holy City would be recaptured. Significantly, the work of al-Wasiti was read out in 1187 in the mosque at Acre shortly before Saladin entered the Holy City in triumph.

The Muslim Reconquest of Jerusalem and the Role of Saladin

The yearning to repossess Jerusalem was made concrete by two charismatic non-Arab Muslim military leaders in Syria: Nur al-Din, a Turk, and Saladin, a Kurd. Both placed the re-conquest of Jerusalem at the heart of their ambitions.

Family dynasties such as those of these two twelfth-century warlords felt the need to justify the power they had usurped; for this they required the support of the religious classes, as well as public ratification of their military activities by the caliph. In this context Saladin seems to have followed very closely the example of Nur al-Din. Saladin could build on the basis of religious unity which this illustrious predecessor had established and so present himself as the defender of Sunni Islam and the promoter of jihad against the Crusaders. In the 1160s a letter from Nur al-Din urges his military commanders to 'purify Jerusalem from the pollution of the cross' and he commissioned a beautiful pulpit to be placed in the Aqsa Mosque to commemorate his hoped-for re-conquest of the Holy City. However, Nur al-Din died in 1174 and it was Saladin who, in 1187, eventually brought his pulpit to Jerusalem.

The sources point clearly to the conquest of Jerusalem by Saladin as the pinnacle of his career and the realisation of a burning personal ambition on his part. After taking Jerusalem, Saladin retrospectively described all his actions leading up to the event as having been entirely directed towards that end. It would appear, too, that public feelings about jihad had been so successfully mobilised by this point that only the capture of Jerusalem would furnish the ultimate proof of both his success and his sincerity. As with Nur al-Din, Jerusalem became the focus of Saladin's jihad campaign: it simply had to be taken. A tone of emotional intensity and longing for Jerusalem was exploited to the full by Saladin's court and army, as well as by the religious classes in Syria, who soon gave him their wholehearted support. With Saladin's capture of the city in 1187, the theme of Jerusalem reached its peak. Sixty-six letters, twelve poems and two sermons were dedicated to this triumphal moment. The deep impact of the recapture of Jerusalem on the Muslim population of the Levant was recorded joyfully by contemporary chroniclers. Muslims gathered to witness Saladin's entry into Jerusalem and to participate in the festivities. Maximum propaganda benefit was derived from the chosen moment of entry into the city. Always aware of the profound impact which his victorious entry into Jerusalem would make, Saladin waited to take possession of the city until Friday 27 Rajab/2 October 1187, the anniversary of Muhammad's *miʿraj*.

On arrival in the Holy City Saladin's soldiers pulled down the gold cross that the Crusaders had placed at the top of the Dome of the Rock, and the

building was purified with rosewater. Saladin's biographers show him resisting the initial temptation to inflict a bloody massacre on the city to avenge what had happened when the Crusaders came in 1099. The role of Jerusalem in the Muslim Counter-Crusade is clearly shown in the sermon delivered by Ibn al-Zaki, a preacher from Damascus, on the occasion of Saladin's entry into Jerusalem; he calls Saladin 'the champion and protector of Your (God's) Holy Land'. The re-conquest of Jerusalem was the climax of Saladin's career. At long last the paramount aim of his jihad had been achieved. One of Saladin's contemporary biographers, 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani, described the recovery of Jerusalem in the hyperbolic statement that Islam had been reborn in the Holy Land.

The Afterlife of Saladin in Europe

The evolution of the Saladin legend in Europe is a remarkable and unexpected story. His glowing reputation there is all the more noteworthy since he was certainly the most feared opponent of the Crusaders. Even in his own lifetime, Saladin received praise from Crusader chroniclers, and above all from Archbishop William of Tyre, who was Chancellor of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem from 1170 to 1184. Commenting on Saladin's accession to power, William describes him as 'a man of sharp mind, active in war, and generous beyond proper measure'. One of the continuators of William's history, Ernoul, praises Saladin's behaviour in Jerusalem after the conquest in 1187, stressing his kindness towards its defeated Christian inhabitants. This most favourable view of Saladin spread to medieval Europe, where it flourished for many centuries afterwards.

Already Dante (d. 1321) placed Saladin on the highest level of the *Inferno*; he is alone but positioned near the heroes of classical Greece and Rome. During the European Enlightenment, literary interest was again shown in Saladin. The German playwright Lessing (d. 1781) chose Saladin to represent Islam in his play, *Nathan the Wise*, completed in 1779, and was at pains to describe Saladin in a most sympathetic light, portraying him as generous-hearted and open-minded. In his novel about the Crusades, *The Talisman*, Sir Walter Scott (d. 1832) creates an imaginary meeting between Saladin and Richard the Lionheart in which he emphasises Saladin's greater finesse and subtlety and calls him 'the fountain of generosity'. These books

are only two in the long tradition of the romance of Saladin in Europe. The idea that only an exceptional human being could have wrested Jerusalem from the Christians so passionately dedicated to the city may have played a part in the heroisation of Saladin in Europe.

The Myth of Saladin in the Middle East

In the Middle East, the myth of Saladin served other purposes and, as the nineteenth century progressed, parallels between European policies past and present gradually crystallised in the Muslim consciousness. These parallels appeared increasingly apt as the wave of European imperialism swept through the Middle East. Nineteenth-century travellers from the West, such as Mark Twain, fascinated by the Crusading heritage, made their way to the Holy Land, and Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany visited Saladin's tomb in Damascus, on which he laid a beautiful bronze wreath, adorned with carefully chosen Arabic inscriptions. It is dated 1315/1898.

In the twentieth century the Arab world 'rediscovered' the Crusades, viewing them as metaphors for current political problems. Some saw the medieval Crusading states as 'proto-colonies', the precursors of Napoleon in Egypt, the British Mandate in Palestine and the state of Israel. The Crusades were thus seen as the initial phase of Western imperialism in the region. Arab nationalist leaders reminded their people of the glorious Muslim victories over the Crusaders, and although the most famous Muslim generals were not ethnically Arab, the rhetoric used in political speeches by twentieth-century Middle Eastern leaders allowed modern Arabs to claim the medieval military triumphs of these famous warlords as their own.

Several Muslim heads of state aspired to become 'the second Saladin', the charismatic figure who would one day reunite the Middle East. The founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini, called the last Friday of Ramadan 'Jerusalem Day', and a very famous Iranian stamp (dated 1980) bears an inscription 'Let us liberate Jerusalem' in Arabic, Persian and English. Jerusalem Day is now celebrated across the Muslim world and reflected by other postage stamps that depict the quintessential icon of the Holy City, the Dome of the Rock, or show Saladin on horseback, returning to recapture Jerusalem. In Iraq, Saddam Husayn, despite his obvious lack of religious credentials, called on occasion for jihad against the West. This self-

styled jihad fighter, who ordered the killing of thousands of Muslim Kurds, modelled himself on Saladin the Kurd. A commemorative stamp, juxtaposing Saladin and Saddam Husayn, with the Dome of the Rock looming in the background, proclaims its own political message:

> From the Deliverer Salah al-Din to the One given victory by God, Saddam Husayn. Jerusalem will remain Arab.

President Hafez Asad of Syria also remembered Saladin. In 1992 he erected an imposing bronze monument within a stone's throw of his palace, in the centre of Damascus: Saladin, in coat of mail, is mounted on a horse and

Figure 16.1 Franciscans of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with organist and two guests. Jerusalem, 2015

surrounded by his officers. Behind him, under the tails of the horses, two Crusader leaders, the 'arch-villain', Reynald of Châtillon, and the King of Jerusalem, Guy de Lusignan, gaze gloomily at the ground. The reason for the juxtaposition of this statue and the presidential palace is not hard to interpret.

Concluding Remarks

Although it is clear that Jerusalem had acquired a position of great religious sanctity for Muslims before the coming of the Crusaders, the loss of the Holy City in 1099 added a new dimension to its significance for Muslims in the Levant. Indeed, it could be argued that Jerusalem's spiritual importance was fully realised by Muslims only when they had lost the city. And despite the pragmatic and disrespectful way in which Saladin's descendants, the Ayyubids, treated Jerusalem in the years 1193–1250, Jerusalem would remain after 1250 in the safe and respectful hands of the Mamluk Turks of Egypt, who erected many religious buildings there, and thereafter the Ottomans in Istanbul, who embellished the Holy City still further and ruled it until the early twentieth century. The legend of Saladin has remained untarnished in East and West alike. And, above all, Jerusalem has played an endlessly significant spiritual role over many centuries. Indeed, it is a sacred construct, seamlessly integrating seminal events with a universal salvation history cherished by all three of the Abrahamic faiths.

17

The Holy Land in the Crusader and Ayyubid Periods, 1099–1250

> If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.
>
> (Psalm 137, verse 5)

> Moses said to his people . . . 'My people . . . go into the holy land (*al-ard al-muqaddasa*) which God has ordained for you.'
>
> (Qur'an, chapter 5, verses 20–1)

A Brief Historical Overview of the Holy Land, 1099–1291

When Pope Urban II made his famous call to Crusade in 1095, the vast Muslim world, stretching from Spain to Central Asia, was divided in both politics and religion. The two great empires of the time, the Shi'ite Fatimids of Egypt and the Sunni Seljuqs of Iran, were in serious decline; Syria and the Holy Land were governed by mutually hostile Turkish chieftains. In the later 1090s Jerusalem was in the hands of two Artuqid Turcoman brothers, Suqman and İl-Ghazi, vassals of the Seljuq Turkish sultans further east. In 1098 al-Afdal, the vizier of the Fatimid caliph, seized Jerusalem just before the arrival of the Franks in 1099.

So the forces of the First Crusade reached a Muslim world which was disunited and unprepared. Never had it faced an attack from such an unexpected quarter. Moreover, the religious concept of jihad, which had rallied the faithful in earlier centuries to defend and extend the frontiers of Islam, had long lain buried and forgotten. It was a perfect moment for Western Christian Europe to strike.

The fall of Jerusalem in 1099 and the subsequent formation of four

Crusader states – Edessa, Antioch, Jerusalem and Tripoli – was accomplished with little Muslim resistance. A military response from the Muslims was slow to come. There was an isolated Muslim victory in 1119 under the Artuqid ruler of Mardin, Najm al-Din İl-Ghazi, at the battle called *Ager Sanguinis* (the Field of Blood), during which the army of Roger of Antioch was defeated and he himself was killed. However, this was not followed up by the Muslims. A turning point came with the capture of Aleppo in 1128 by the governor of Mosul, ʿImad al-Din Zengi; this military leader, called *sanguinus* (blood-shedder) by the Franks, was terrifying both to them and to his own army. Two important cities – Mosul in Iraq and Aleppo in Syria – had thus come under one ruler, Zengi, who now had a strong base for military attacks on Crusader territory.

Gradually, under the firm leadership of Muslim military warlords – such as Zengi, his son Nur al-Din, and the latter's even more famous successor Saladin – the Holy Land, Syria and Egypt were reunited. Edessa, the Frankish state most distant from the Holy Land, was the first to be lost. Zengi's conquest of Edessa in 1144 proved a tremendous morale boost to the Muslims, and the Second Crusade, sent shortly afterwards, did not regain Edessa and indeed achieved very little. The high point for Islam in the twelfth century was Saladin's victory at the battle of Hattin in 1187, after which he conquered Jerusalem and entered the city in triumph. The Third Crusade, launched in response to this loss, ended in stalemate, Richard the Lionheart departed empty-handed from the Holy Land; soon afterwards, in 1193, Saladin died. Acre on the Levantine coast became the new capital of the Frankish Kingdom of Jerusalem.

After a period of détente and then political turmoil under the Ayyubids, Saladin's successors, the Mamluks of Egypt, a new, highly successful and fully militarised Turkish Muslim state, came to power in Cairo in 1250. Within forty years they had removed the remaining Frankish presence from Muslim soil; Antioch fell to Sultan Baybars in 1268 and Tripoli was taken by his successor Qalawun in 1289. The fall of Acre in 1291 symbolised the end of the Crusades in the Middle East; thereafter the Holy Land would remain for many centuries under Muslim Turkish rule until the dawn of the modern era.

Figure 17.1 Map of the Crusader states in Palestine, Syria and Anatolia

The Early Establishment of the Crusader States in the Holy Land

The motivation for what came to be called the First Crusade to the Holy Land is much debated. Several versions exist of the famous sermon of Pope Urban II, delivered in 1095. In one document, entitled *Letter of Instruction to the Crusaders*, dated December 1095, Pope Urban urges the princes of Gaul and their subjects 'to free the churches of the East . . . as a preparation for the remission of all their sins'. In view of this emphasis, the medieval chroniclers used the term 'pilgrims' (*peregrini*) for those who set out east in 1096–7 on the arduous journey to the Holy Land seeking salvation. However, Archbishop Baldric of Dol (d. 1130) emphasises a more militaristic aspect of the enterprise in the following words that he attributes to the Pope:

> Under Jesus Christ our Leader may you struggle for your Jerusalem, in Christian battle-line . . . And may you deem it a beautiful thing to die for Christ in that city in which he died for us.

On 10 March 1098, Baldwin of Boulogne took over the Armenian Christian principality of Edessa and founded the first Frankish state in the Middle East – the County of Edessa. On 3 June of the same year the main body of Crusaders captured Antioch and in January 1099 the Principality of Antioch was established under the rule of Bohemond of Sicily. The Holy City of Jerusalem fell to the Franks on 15 July 1099. On Christmas Day 1100 Baldwin of Boulogne was crowned king of Jerusalem in Bethlehem. A fourth Crusader or Frankish state, the County of Tripoli, formerly a small principality ruled by an Arab family, the Banu 'Ammar, was founded there in 1109.

The Frankish Kingdom of Jerusalem was the largest and most important of the four Crusader states. At its greatest extent, the Kingdom occupied most of historic Palestine, bordering in the north on the County of Tripoli and in the south reaching as far as Aila on the Gulf of 'Aqaba. The area of three of these states was a long thin maritime strip; only one of them, Edessa, was situated inland. And it was the first to be lost to the Muslims. So geography dictated that the Franks had only a precarious grip on their territories and were always vulnerable.

The County of Edessa and the Principality of Antioch protected the northern and north-eastern borders of Syria. The Kingdom of Jerusalem,

Figure 17.2 Modern statue of Saladin in Kerak, Jordan

comprising the Holy City itself, the port of Jaffa, and a few coastal and highland towns, was inevitably the most prestigious Frankish state. The provenance of the Frankish rulers was reflected in three of the states that they governed; Antioch was settled predominantly by Normans, Tripoli by Provençals, and Jerusalem by the French. Edessa, a Christian Armenian city, continued to be populated largely by Armenians.

It seems clear that in 1099 there was a general massacre of the local population, Jews as well as Muslims, by the Crusaders. On conquering the coastal towns, the Franks either killed the Muslim and Jewish inhabitants or drove them out. Most Franks settled in the towns and allowed the Eastern Christians to stay there. Some Franks, however, did live in the countryside, in or near castles or in fortified villages. Other elements of the rural population in the Frankish states included Arabic-speaking peasants, either Muslim or Eastern Christian, as well as some small Jewish communities in Galilee, the Druze in the mountains above Sidon, and the Samaritans near Nablus. This, then, was a multi-confessional land.

Only Franks and Eastern Christians were allowed to live in Jerusalem itself, in addition to a frequently changing pilgrim population. Between 1100 and 1120 the Jerusalem population was so small that only the earlier Christian quarter near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was inhabited. King Baldwin I moved Syrian Christians from Transjordan and settled them in the former Jewish quarter of the city. By the 1180s the population of Jerusalem numbered between 20,000 and 30,000. According to John of Würzburg, who visited Jerusalem in the early 1160s, the residents of the city were mostly French, with some Italians, Spaniards and Germans, as well as Eastern Christians of many sects.

Within Jerusalem the victorious Franks did not destroy the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque. But centuries of generally harmonious coexistence between the three Abrahamic faiths were shattered by the European newcomers. They broke taboos and literally occupied these two sacred Islamic sites in Jerusalem. Moreover, a large golden cross was placed on the top of the Dome of the Rock, dominating the whole city.

Until 1187 the city of Jerusalem would remain the administrative centre of the Frankish Kingdom. Seven of the nine rulers of the Kingdom were crowned there, and the last coronation ceremony, that of Guy de Lusignan

Figure 17.3 Jerusalem: the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque

and Queen Sibylla, took place there on 20 July 1186. Legal matters were dealt with in the Tower of David and to the east of it a new royal palace was built.

Once the 'sacred geography' of Frankish Jerusalem had been established, special events in its history were celebrated. The conquest of the city in 1099 was commemorated by a solemn event on 15 July every year. A procession led by the patriarch moved from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre to the Aqsa Mosque, renamed the Templum Domini (the Temple of the Lord). Pilgrims on their sacred itineraries also visited the Temple of the Lord and the Dome of the Rock, renamed the Templum Solomonis (the Temple of Solomon). When a coronation ceremony took place in Jerusalem, the royal processions moved from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre to the Temple of the Lord, where the king laid down his crown on the altar.

The European newcomers to the Holy Land had no experience of the conditions and way of life there. They were in an alien place. They rarely knew Arabic. They were not Muslims. They were dressed in a different way from the indigenous populations in the Holy Land. Inevitably, after the initial exultation of victory had begun to recede there were problems to be

solved; above all, how to survive as a foreign minority in the land they had conquered.

During the next few decades the Franks extended their rule over the whole of the Holy Land, using a variety of strategies, including alliances, treaties and military conquest. There were frequent examples of pragmatic, opportunistic, short-lived economic and military alliances across the ideological divide during their early presence in the Holy Land. Shared local interests were more important, especially when hostile Muslim aggressors came from outside the region; 'We do not want anybody from the east' was the slogan of local rulers, both Frankish and Muslim, in the Holy Land. In 1108–9 King Baldwin I of Jerusalem and the Turkish ruler Tughtegin of Damascus agreed to share the revenues from the harvests of lands west of Lake Tiberias and the upper Jordan. In 1115, when the Seljuq sultan Muhammad sent an army into Syria, the Muslim armies of Aleppo and Damascus actually allied with Roger of Antioch, defeating the sultan's forces at the battle of Danith. In this way, the Franks could slot easily into an already existing context of small, fleeting alliances between the Muslim rulers in the region, and they were able to exploit this situation to their own advantage.

On the other hand, the Franks were keen to consolidate their position and also to expand their hold on the Holy Land by military means. From a very early stage their leaders depended a great deal on the assistance of the Italian maritime republics who provided a de facto navy. In return for helping the Franks to conquer the Levantine ports, the Italians received commercial privileges and special quarters in some of the ports. Baldwin I was helped by the Genoese to take Arsuf and Caesarea in 1101 and by the Pisans to capture Acre in 1104. The Venetians assisted in conquering Sidon in 1110 and, after their participation in the conquest of Tyre in 1124, they were rewarded with one-third of the city and were almost completely exempt from the payment of customs duties. The result of this cooperation between Frankish leaders and the Italian maritime republics led to the formation of separate enclaves within the ports, which were not under the jurisdiction of the Frankish ruler, and which were administered by officials sent from Italy. In the mid-thirteenth century, the situation deteriorated, leading to internal conflicts amongst the Italians, which came to be known as the 'War of St Sabas'.

The Frankish need to have access to the Levantine ports was crucial. By gaining possession of these, reinforcements in men and supplies could be sent safely from Europe. The necessary human resources would not only be military men; experts in building techniques, quarrymen, stonemasons, merchants, shopkeepers, millers, armourers, grooms, doctors, priests, scribes and many other categories of worker were needed.

The greatest concentration of Frankish settlement was along the Levantine coast, in Antioch, Tripoli, Tyre and Acre; by the 1120s Acre had replaced Tyre as the major market of that area. In these ports with their flourishing markets, alongside the Italians, the Frankish settlers acted as middlemen, using their contacts in a countryside inhabited predominantly by Muslims and with local urban manufacturing workshops. The resident merchants bought products for their own use, such as textiles, glassware and ceramics, either from local manufacturers or imported from further east. Silks from Antioch and Tripoli and cotton fabrics woven in Tyre were in demand in Europe. The markets traded in sugar, spices and slaves. The Frankish states also had agriculturally rich areas which produced sugar, fruits, wheat, olives and wine. Muslim geographical writings and Jewish merchants' letters, found amongst the famous Geniza documents in Cairo, both emphasise that a major export from the Holy Land was olive oil and its by-products, including soap.

In matters of trade, commercial considerations prevailed over ideology and Franks and Muslims engaged in trade with each other throughout the time of Frankish rule in the Holy Land and thereafter. The German scholar Michael Köhler has argued that, especially during the first half of the twelfth century, many commercial treaties were signed between Franks and Muslims. In order to protect their mercantile interests, Muslim traders needed access to the Levantine ports, most of which were in Frankish hands for long periods of time. The Damascene chronicler, Ibn al-Qalanisi, mentions in his account of the year 1111 that the Muslim governor of Ascalon, Shams al-Khilafa, made a truce with Baldwin because he was 'more desirous of trading than of fighting'. The Spanish Muslim traveller, Ibn Jubayr, who visited Acre in 1184, describes it as 'the focus of ships and caravans, and the meeting-place of Muslim and Christian merchants from all regions'. Some Muslim, and even more Eastern Christian scribes were employed by the Franks. According

to Ibn Jubayr, there were Arabic-speaking Christians working in the customs house at Acre.

The Military Orders in the Holy Land

A crucial element in the continuing survival of the Franks in the Holy Land were the Knightly Orders. Amongst those orders that were present there, two major ones stand out – the Knights Hospitaller and the Knights Templar. There were also Teutonic Knights.

In the middle of the eleventh century merchants from Amalfi in Italy had established the Hospital of St John in Jerusalem in the vicinity of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; those who worked there were practising Benedictine monks, who cared for the sick and for pilgrims. In 1113 they were recognised by Pope Paschal II as a separate religious order, the Hospitallers of St John; their Grand Master, Gerard Thom, was given the title of Rector of the Hospital. Soon, from 1136 at the latest, a key military role emerged for the Hospitallers, and under the leadership of Gerard's successor, Raymond du Puy, they took up military duties alongside their medical ones. They were recognisable by their uniform of a red surcoat decorated with a white cross and by the Maltese cross in their capes. Their standing army of skilled cavalry proved to be invaluable to the Frankish kings and their castle-building skills were famous, as will be discussed shortly. They were often charged with the duty of protecting pilgrims from Europe for whom they hired troops to accompany them on the coastal route to and from Jerusalem. The Hospitallers benefitted from generous charitable funding from Europe. By the 1170s the Hospital could house up to 2,000 patients, and Saladin, after his triumphal entry into Jerusalem in 1187, was so impressed with the Hospital that he allowed it to stay open for a year so that it could leave its affairs in good order.

Another military order, the Knights Templar, was established by Hugh de Payns and Godfrey de Saint-Omer in 1119. They made a very favourable impression on King Baldwin II and he gave them the Aqsa Mosque for their headquarters, near his own residence at the southern extremity of the Temple Mount (the Haram). This proximity to the Temple Mount led to their acquiring the name 'Templars'. They repaired the underground area of the Aqsa Mosque, called Solomon's Stables, and used it to accommodate many horses and grooms. They protected pilgrims by organising military convoys

Figure 17.4 Model of a Teutonic knight

on the route from Jaffa to Jerusalem. They wore white surcoats and mantles with red crosses on their front.

Both these orders of warrior monks soon played a key role in the defence of the Holy Land under Frankish domination. Theirs was the responsibility of looking after the castles and citadels built or rebuilt by Frankish rulers. The military skills of the military orders were also of enormous benefit to the Crusader states in their expansionist aims. The wealth of these orders was used to assemble large armies, permanently mobilised. Their Muslim opponents, who greatly feared them, singled them out for unusual severity when they took them prisoner. The Hospitallers and the Templars put down permanent roots in the Holy Land, but the relationship of the Frankish rulers with these increasingly powerful and independent-minded military orders proved problematic as time went on. After the fall of Edessa in 1144 their role became even more important in the states of Tripoli and Antioch as they became more vulnerable to Muslim attacks.

The role of the Hospitallers and Templars was underpinned by two major concepts – the monastic life and knightly chivalry. The Archbishop of Jerusalem, William of Tyre, writing between 1170 and 1174, had mixed views about the military order; he writes positively about their early activities:

> Certain noble men of knightly rank, religious men, devoted to God and fearing him, bound themselves to Christ's service in the hands of the Lord Patriarch. They promised to live in perpetuity as regular canons, without possessions, under vows of chastity and obedience.

He stresses that their primary duty was that 'of protecting the roads and routes against the attacks of robbers and brigands'. However, his early rosy picture of the Templars recedes over time. Indeed, he specifically criticises their immense wealth, accusing them of taking away tithes from God's churches, and saying that they 'have made themselves exceedingly troublesome'.

Muslim leaders feared and loathed the Knights Templar and Hospitaller. It is not surprising that they regarded these fighting monks as their most implacable enemies. The Arab chronicler, Abu Shama (d. 1268), quotes Saladin as saying: 'I will purify the earth of these two filthy races. They are the most wicked of all the infidels.' And Saladin did indeed treat the Templars and Hospitallers with extreme severity after the battle of Hattin in 1187.

Frankish Religious Monuments and Castles: A New Visual Landscape

What was the impact of the Franks on the Holy Land? In a word, they transformed the landscape. They did so in the most literal sense by the buildings that they erected – most obviously, their ecclesiastical monuments. The capture of Jerusalem in 1099 triggered a frenzied building boom of staggering proportions. It was in the Holy City itself that this became most evident, and the result was to make it the most intensively sacralised city on earth, putting Rome itself in the shade. This did not happen by accident. It would be at once futile and disingenuous to propose that all this construction activity was entirely religious in its aims, even though there was a very heavy concentration on buildings with a religious function. A mid-twelfth-century map of Jerusalem (Cambrai, Centre culturel, ms. 437, f. 11) reflects this reality. Triumphalism certainly had its part to play. In a sense, every new Frankish monument was a proclamation of political and military victory. But there was more to it than this. Buildings are facts on the ground. They occupy land and in so doing they make a permanent claim to it. When that land is contested, and contested not only politically but in the extra dimension of religious faith, the stakes rise. The buildings themselves also rise accordingly, and in a very literal sense. The more impressive they are – the more lofty, the more extensive, the more richly decorated – the more of a statement they make. And here the Frankish monuments had a built-in advantage over both local Muslim structures and those of the local Eastern Christians. Over much of Western Europe, by the year 1100 Romanesque architecture, from Santiago da Compostela to Cluny to Durham to Worms, had produced abundant masterpieces from cathedrals to abbeys to parish churches, featuring massive towers, lofty barrel-vaulted naves and triple-arched west fronts packed with figural sculpture of high quality. This was the style which was imported into the Holy Land, and the impact that it must have had is hard to exaggerate. Neither the Muslims nor the local Christians could compete, especially in their post-Umayyad monuments. The religious buildings of the Eastern Christians in the Levant for the most part faithfully reflected the minority standing that these Christians had had for almost half a millennium. They were modest and did not call attention to themselves by their external form. And Jerusalem itself had little of significance to offer in the way of Muslim

buildings apart from those on the Temple Mount (al-Haram al-Sharif) itself. Very quickly, then, Jerusalem, thanks to the torrent of new buildings put up by the Franks, took on the outward semblance of a Western European city – with this crucial difference, that the proportion of religious to secular buildings was much higher. So its look was aggressively Latin Christian. And in that time and place that look had powerful implications. It claimed the holy place in the city for Frankish and not Eastern Christianity. And it expressed the confidence that the Crusaders were there to stay. Even the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque, the Islamic jewels in Jerusalem's crown, were requisitioned by the Crusaders. In the Aqsa Mosque the Templars added large sections, mainly in the front of the building, and they refurbished the façade. The Dome of the Rock was converted into a church and consecrated on 9 April 1141. So the Jerusalem of 1185 would have been unrecognisable to anyone who had lived there a century earlier; it was propelled to a much higher visibility than it had experienced for many centuries.

The Crusader building boom, which generated over 400 ecclesiastical structures, was by no means confined to Jerusalem itself. Commemorative and other churches, as well as abbeys and monasteries, were built by the score, especially on sites with biblical associations. Thus an abbey was reworked from an ancient building in Bethany under the auspices of Queen Melisende (her sister Iveta became abbess there) and a church was built over Lazarus' tomb. Some sites became multi-confessional: at Hebron, Jews, Christians and Muslims alike visited the remains of the Old Testament patriarchs – Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Given the huge scale and quantity of all this building activity, which was, moreover, mostly fitted into a mere ninety-odd years, and has been faithfully recorded in a multi-volume work on Crusader churches by Professor Denys Pringle, it is noticeable that so little of it remains in good condition, though physical traces of over 200 churches remain. The virtual disappearance of such a huge body of architecture is no accident. Rather, it was an almost inevitable consequence of the Muslim reconquest, not least because the mass departure of the Franks left most of these buildings unused. Saladin died quite soon after recapturing Jerusalem, and before his death he had the Third Crusade on his hands, so he had no time to get very far with the serious task of de-Christianising Jerusalem, let alone with giving the city a Muslim facelift. But it is significant

that he did begin the long process of repurposing some Frankish Christian buildings to Muslim functions. And as in Jerusalem, so in the rest of the Holy Land. Once the Franks had gone, their religious buildings would face either transformation or ruin.

So much, then, for the ecclesiastical foundations erected in the Holy Land, which unquestionably lent town and country alike a certain Western European character. What of the secular buildings erected by the Franks? If one excludes domestic and industrial architecture, the inevitable by-products of Crusader social and commercial life – and the excavations of Israeli archaeologists have shed a flood of light on such structures, modest though they mostly are – it becomes very clear that the principal legacy of the Franks is their castles. While some of these were deliberately destroyed in the campaigns of Baybars from 1260 onwards to mop up the remaining Crusader resistance, the obvious military utility of many such castles meant that they were simply taken over by the triumphant Muslim Mamluks – after all, apart from the occasional chapel, they did not serve religious functions. Considered as a group, they neatly complement the ecclesiastical heritage of the Frankish states, with its mixed messages of religious, political and military triumph. But here the proportions are reversed: the castles proclaim military, political and, by implication, religious supremacy. They too claim the land, and in a much more brutally obvious way than ecclesiastical architecture can. For they plainly defend that land by force of arms. The ramparts and multiple towers of Acre show the same mindset at work in an urban context.

Fortified cities were no novelty in the Muslim Near East around 1100, as the walls of Cairo, Antioch and Diyar Bakr show, but it is instructive to note that the great fortified urban complexes of Syria and the Jazira – Aleppo, Damascus and Harran among others – postdate the great Crusader castles of the twelfth century and clearly owe much to them in a technical sense. However, the matter goes deeper than this. It was the Crusaders who so decisively militarised the Syro-Palestinian landscape, lands which before their arrival had no need of castles. The isolated Muslim castles of Palestine and Syria – ʿAjlun, Shayzar or the many Ismaʿili Shiʿite examples – are therefore also a response, though of poorer quality and on a much less ambitious scale, to the Crusader challenge. A parallel may be drawn with the many Armenian castles scattered all over Cilicia – 'Little Armenia' – which also reflect the

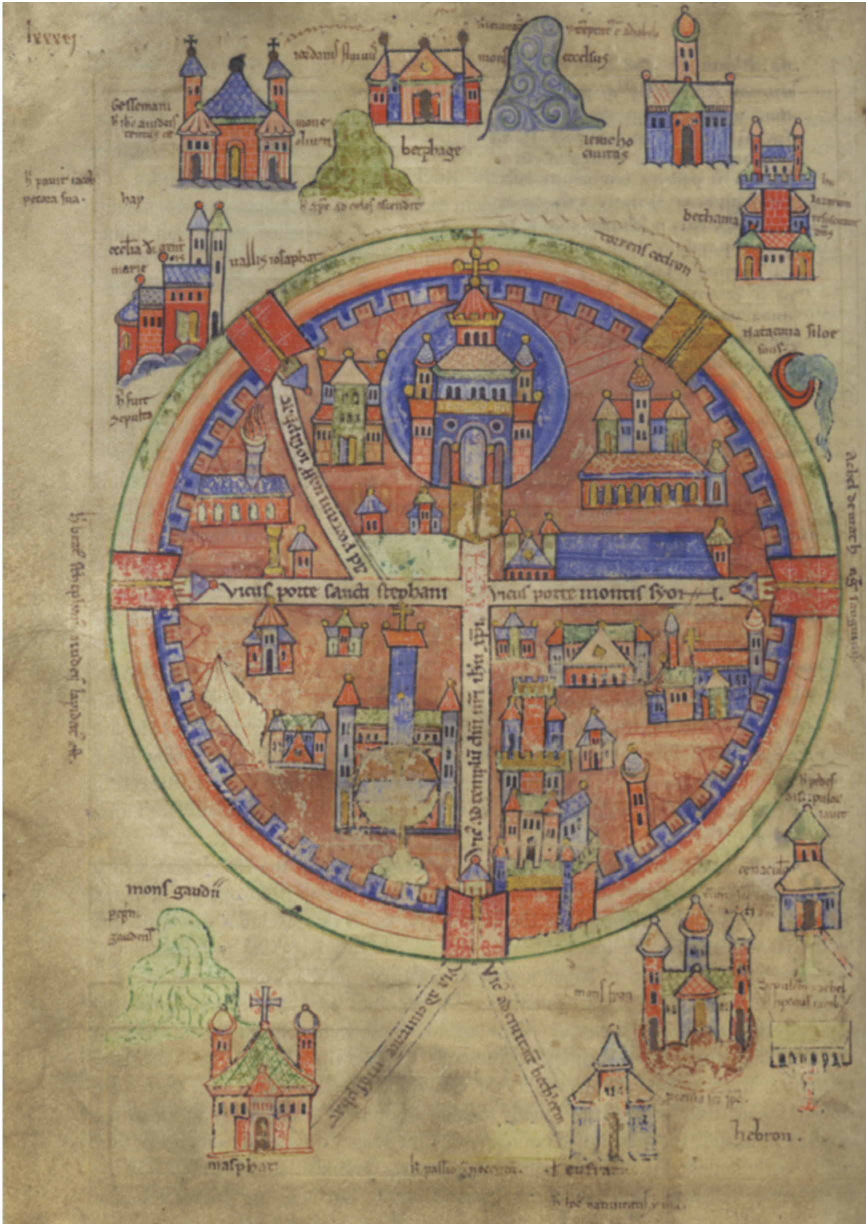

Figure 17.5 Jerusalem as medieval Christians saw it

Figure 17.6 Krak des Chevaliers, perhaps the most perfect medieval castle, held by the Hospitallers from 1144 to 1271

inherent political instability of that short-lived kingdom, struggling to survive in a hostile environment.

Much can be deduced from both the sheer quantity of Frankish castles and their careful siting. Seen together rather than separately, they are clearly part of a strategic plan to appropriate and secure all the land that the Franks had conquered and were afraid to lose – hence their distribution across the length and breadth of the Frankish principalities. This aim explains their sometimes out-of-the-way location, such as that of Wuayra, near Wadi Musa beside Petra in the inhospitable extreme south, which had oversight of the route to the Red Sea. Many castles dominated important roads and could therefore threaten the enemy's communication and trade networks while simultaneously protecting Christian pilgrims. Even a small garrison could with impunity sally forth from such castles in lightning attacks on caravans of merchants or Muslim pilgrims. The mere threat of such attacks was enough to inhibit travel. The disadvantages of a remote location could be offset

by ensuring intervisibility and communication between castles, whether by means of fire, smoke or reflected light. Not surprisingly, therefore, steep hilltop sites (which also discouraged the use of enemy siege engines, used by Saladin to devastating effect at Belvoir) were at a premium, as were coastal sites. Pigeon post was used for longer communications. Since the Franks were a beleaguered minority that suffered from a chronic and acute manpower shortage, castles were an ideal method of making a few men do the work of many, and they did not have to be huge to be effective. The early ones were hall keeps on two floors, or tall thin towers; as many as eighty small towers have been identified in the Kingdom of Jerusalem alone. A relatively small garrison could easily store enough water and provisions to make a small castle impervious to siege. A visitor to Margat in 1212 said that the castle contained enough provisions for five years. It was a good example of those castles that were built on a much more ambitious scale to serve as bases from which to invade enemy territory or to halt enemy attacks on Frankish territory, or indeed had an important offensive role – the dispatch of raiding parties to extort tribute from surrounding Muslim areas. Small wonder, then, that some of the castles were described by Muslim chroniclers as being a bone in the throat of the Muslims. Their sheer number and their wide distribution made them a constant and irritating reminder of the Frankish presence all over the Holy Land. So although the web of control represented by the castles was at best thin, it held, and thereby exerted psychological pressure on the Muslims.

In the twelfth century castle building was concentrated in three areas: northern Galilee, the south-west frontier facing Ascalon, which was in Fatimid hands, and Transjordan, from Kerak in the north to Aila in the Gulf of ʿAqaba in the south. By the end of the twelfth century, enclosure castles were being built in remote areas to provide refuge for the whole Frankish population living there. In the thirteenth century, as the Franks were pushed westwards, more castles, which were fine examples of military architecture, were built towards the coast to defend what remained of Frankish territory.

The Franks brought with them the most up-to-date technology in the building and design of castles, information which had been acquired the hard way in faction-torn Western Europe with its robber barons in their impregnable keeps. And they brought the necessary experts too. These included not only architects of the highest calibre, but also stone-quarriers, masons,

stone-carvers and carpenters. The Franks did not take any short cuts in their building materials. They used massive square masonry, despite the costs involved. And they introduced numerous defensive devices that had been perfected in Europe, such as moats, dogleg entrances, projecting towers, spiral staircases that disadvantaged attackers, long expanses of smooth glacis, multiple lines of defence, including secondary ramparts which exposed the enemy to unexpected fire, and the choice of a rocky site that defeated sappers. The quality of stonework was far in advance of local Muslim work. But there was very little decoration. These castles were practical instruments of control. And the Frankish military architects could not only build on the most forbidding sites but could also tackle jaw-dropping challenges. Examples include Saone/Sahyun, which Lawrence of Arabia described as the 'most sensational thing in castle-building I have ever seen'. Here a landlocked peninsula was turned into an effective island by removing the entire mass of rock, many thousands of tons of it that joined the site to the mountains behind, leaving only a slender column of rock, easily defended, to carry a drawbridge. Monte Reale in Jordan belongs in the same heroic category, with its gigantic rock-cut well-shaft leading down 375 steps to the water source. These castles were designed to be self-supporting – hence their long gloomy galleries for stables and provisions and their vast cisterns. In case of trouble they could also serve as a safe haven for the local villagers who in happier times would provide their supplies; for it was common practice for the garrison to live in peaceful symbiosis with the nearby villagers.

A crucial advantage for the Franks was the involvement of the military orders, principally the Templars and Hospitallers (but also the Teutonic knights, who built Starkenberg/Montfort), in the entire castle-building enterprise. Their wealth allowed them to restore and maintain a network of castles and they themselves lived in them. The Hospitallers seized an existing castle in Northern Syria in 1142; their rebuilding and refurbishment of it made it the most famous of all Frankish castles – Krak des Chevaliers. It well deserves its accolade as the most perfect castle ever built. Its strategic position defended the north-eastern frontier of the County of Tripoli and obstructed Muslim routes to the Levantine coast.

The involvement of the Templars and Hospitallers in the phenomenon of the castles meant that their manning and maintenance of these crucial

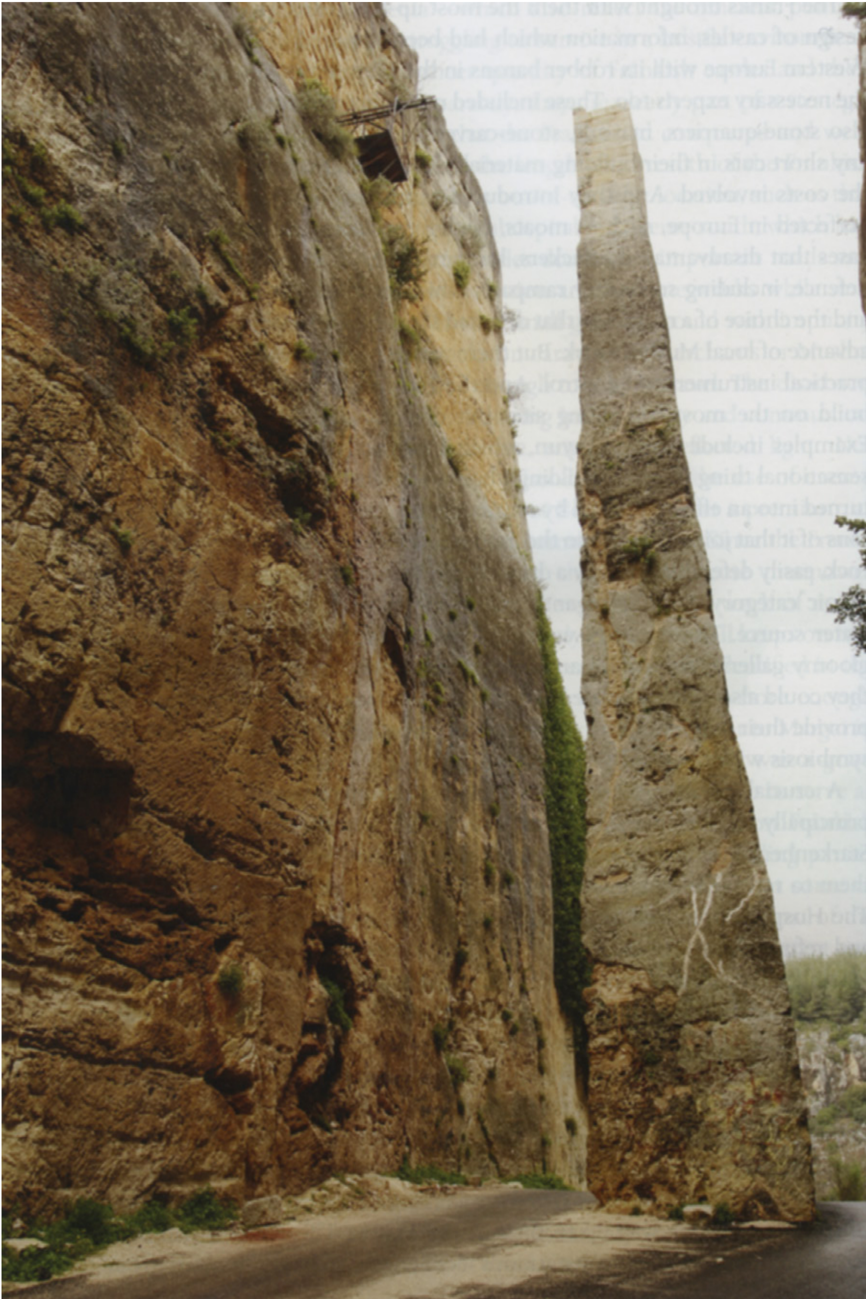

Figure 17.7 The twelfth-century Crusader Sahyun or Saône Castle, with its spectacular drawbridge

buildings was the responsibility not of some local warlord, here today and gone tomorrow, but was in the safe hands of a corporate body of highly motivated fighting monks who had taken vows of poverty and chastity and who owed unswerving obedience to their superiors in a chain of command all the way up to their Grand Master. These orders had been set up by papal charter and their constitutions deliberately kept them apart from the petty political squabbles of the day. They were envisaged to last for centuries and noble families across Europe provided them with recruits.

Aspects of Frankish Government and Society

The Kingdom of Jerusalem imported a European model of social hierarchy, but it did not correspond exactly to that of feudal Europe. Apart from the clergy, there were only two classes below the monarch: the nobility who provided the main military forces of the Kingdom, and the merchant class, known as the burgesses. Apart from the four ruling families of the Frankish states, almost all the nobles who came there were parvenus. But such newcomers could succeed, especially by shrewd marriage alliances. The notorious Reynald of Châtillon, whose escapades down the Red Sea shocked the Muslim world and whom Saladin had personally vowed to kill, made two advantageous marriages, and Guy de Lusignan became king of Jerusalem by marrying Queen Sibylla. The burgesses comprised all those who were not nobles. In the Frankish Kingdom of Jerusalem they made up the majority of the population, but in the other three Frankish states they were outnumbered by Eastern Christians. The burgesses were in charge of local small-scale trade, but not of the international commerce which was handled by the Italians.

Muslims and Jews were not debarred from entering the Holy City for the whole time of Frankish rule there. In due course they were allowed in to conduct business and to pray, as the evidence of the famous twelfth-century Arab writer of memoirs, Usama b. Munqidh, shows. No doubt, they were also needed by the conquerors to undertake crucial jobs which the Crusaders could not or would not do, serving as vendors, bath-attendants, dyers and in other practical capacities.

There is evidence that the Franks carried on certain Muslim administrative practices that they found in place on their arrival. For example, they adopted the concept of the *muhtasib* (*mehtesseb*), an official whose duty

it was to visit the markets daily and to ensure that proper weights and measures were used in the markets. Moreover, it would seem that, certainly in some Frankish areas at least, Muslims were required to pay a poll tax, to the Christian Frankish government, just like the poll tax (*jizya*) Muslim governments had imposed on their Christian and Jewish subjects in the pre-Crusading period. When writing about Nablus, Ibn Jubayr mentions that its Muslim subjects 'lived as subjects of the Franks who annually collected a tax from them and did not change any law or cult of theirs'.

The population of the rural areas remained the indigenous inhabitants, Muslims, Eastern Christians and Jews. They were responsible for the agriculture on which the Frankish cities depended. However, unlike in Europe, there were no close links between the lords who lived in the towns and the peasants who worked their lands. Ironically, too, the Western European Christians, who had come out east to rescue their Eastern co-religionists, did not provide the latter with a better life. But it is difficult to discover how Muslims lived under Frankish rule. Neither Frankish nor Muslim chroniclers show any interest in the legal or other internal administration of the subject peoples. Isolated references cannot be taken to indicate widespread practices.

Recorded external relations between the Franks and neighbouring Eastern Christian polities mostly involved marriage alliances. Links with Byzantium had not begun well. The contact between the Frankish armies en route to the Holy Land and the Christian Byzantine emperor, Alexius Comnenus, in Constantinople in 1097–8 was not a good start. The Franks broke their promises to Alexius to hand over any territory they might gain on their way across Byzantine Anatolia. Anna Comnena, Alexius' daughter, writes in her memoirs about her father's attitude to the Crusaders:

> He feared the incursions of these people, for he had already experienced the savage fury of their attack, their fickleness of mind, and their readiness to approach anything with violence.

Nevertheless, in the absence of suitable women from Europe, the Frankish upper classes were obliged to arrange marriages with Eastern Christians. Amalric I married the Byzantine princess Maria Comnena, whilst the wife of King Baldwin II was the Armenian princess Morphia of Melitene.

In the Crusader states there is some evidence of conversion from Islam to Christianity. Some converted Muslims were employed by Frankish rulers, such as Godfrey of Bouillon or King Baldwin I of Jerusalem, or they fought in Frankish armies. Some Franks married Muslim women after they had been baptised. The Egyptian chronicler al-Maqrizi (d. 1442) mentions that the Franks often forced Muslims to convert to Christianity. James of Vitry (d. 1240), Bishop of Acre, baptised a number of Muslims, and Franciscans and Dominicans conducted successful missionary activities in the thirteenth century. Conversely, a number of Franks are reported to have converted to Islam, both in the heat of war and in times of peace.

The Muslim Response and Recovery, 1099–1187

When the First Crusade burst into the Holy Land with its dreadful carnage and bloodshed, en route to and especially in Jerusalem, the local Muslims were shocked and terrified. They had little idea of who their attackers were or why they had come. Local Muslim poets used images of rape and pollution to describe the coming of the Franks. The Frankish occupation of the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock was seen as an act of grave desecration in Muslim eyes. Muslim political disunity and an absence of jihad feelings undoubtedly gave the zealous armies of the First Crusade the ideological edge. Even allowing for the rhetoric and exaggeration aroused by feelings of grief and humiliation, the Muslim accounts of the fall of the Holy City bear witness to terrible destruction and bloodshed. The Arab chronicler, Ibn Muyassar (d. 1278), records laconically that the Franks destroyed shrines, killed nearly all the inhabitants of the city, burned copies of the Qur'an and stole gold and silver candelabras from the Dome of the Rock. Indeed, all Muslim accounts express shock and horror at the massacre of Muslims and Jews at the hands of the victorious Franks. And the extent of the bloodshed is confirmed by the Frankish sources themselves. The *Gesta Francorum* (*The Deeds of the Franks*) relates: 'The slaughter was so great that our men waded in blood up to their ankles.' Similar brutality was shown in other towns conquered by the Franks, such as Maʻarrat al-Nuʻman in 1098 and Haifa in 1100. A large number of Muslims were enslaved by the invaders. The fate of some cities was less brutal; Nablus, for example, surrendered without bloodshed, and in 1110, as Fulcher of Chartres (d. 1278) reports, Muslim

peasants in Sidon chose to stay so that they could cultivate the land for King Baldwin I.

From 1100 to 1125 the military response from the Muslim side against the Franks was very limited. Isolated military victories, such as the battle of Danith or the Field of Blood, were not followed up. The joining of the Holy Land, Syria and Egypt under one strong military ruler, combined with a revitalisation of jihad spirit, were necessary before the Franks could be ousted from the Muslim Levant. At first the stirrings of jihad feeling were only minimal. Early on, during the Frankish occupation, one solitary voice, that of a Damascus preacher, al-Sulami, spoke out, warning of the dangers of allowing the Franks to take the coastal towns, and urging Muslims to wage jihad against them before it was too late. In his *Book of Holy War* (*c.* 1106), al-Sulami blamed Frankish success on the spiritual decline and political fragmentation of the Muslim world, and he called for religious rearmament; the local Muslims must wage a personal spiritual struggle before conducting war against the Franks. These prescient words went unheeded.

Zengi is praised after his conquest of Edessa in 1144 in the Muslim sources as a martyr (*shahid*), but their portrayal of his conduct leading up to this event falls far short of the panegyrics they give to his son Nur al-Din and to Saladin the Kurd after him. These two are the jihad warriors par excellence; the terrifying, brutal military commander Zengi does not fit that model at all. A true yearning to repossess Jerusalem was made concrete by Nur al-Din and Saladin. Both placed the reconquest of Jerusalem at the heart of their ambitions. The Holy City simply had to be taken and it was the hitherto dormant spirit of jihad which triggered the unification and encirclement of Frankish lands, the necessary basis for its eventual conquest. An increasingly intense campaign of jihad, promoted through an alliance between the warlords and the Sunni religious classes, was focused, not on the borders of Islam, but right within the Islamic world itself, on the city of Jerusalem. According to Islamic sources it is with Nur al-Din that the jihad phenomenon which underpinned the eventual Muslim recapture of Jerusalem began in earnest. Both Nur al-Din and Saladin are presented in the Muslim sources as being model *mujahidun* (fighters of jihad), who are pursuing both the greater jihad (*al-jihad al-akbar*) which is a spiritual striving in the path of God to improve one's inner self, as well as the lesser

jihad (*al-jihad al-asghar*) which is fought militarily to defend and extend the borders of Islam.

A genre of religious writing, known as the *Fada'il al-Quds* books (the *Merits of Jerusalem*) and already current in the eleventh century, now regained popularity with Syrian Muslims in the time of Nur al-Din and thereafter. They became a powerful tool in the spiritual and political jihad programme aimed increasingly at the Muslim reconquest of Jerusalem. Almost all the compilers of such works came from the Holy Land and Syria. It is easy to suggest clear and convincing reasons for the phenomenon of the virtual 'explosion' of works on the *Merits of Jerusalem* at this time. Such books emphasised the factors which contributed to the importance of the Holy City for Muslims, such as the associations of the Prophet with the city, his Night Journey into heaven, the special value for Muslims of dying in Jerusalem, and its role as the site of the Day of Judgement. These books were read out publicly to large audiences from 1160 onwards and helped to build up the expectation that the Holy City would be recaptured. New works of this kind were composed. In addition, an earlier *Fada'il* work by al-Raba'i (d. 1043) was read out in public in April 1187 just when Saladin's forces were preparing for the Jerusalem campaign. The Muslim concept of jihad was now given a more tangible focus than it had had for centuries. This programme of jihad was keenly supported by religious scholars in the new Sunni madrasas built in Damascus and Aleppo through the patronage of Nur al-Din and various amirs and bearing grandiose jihad inscriptions. Moreover, the jihad to regain the Holy City was the subject of sermons, letters and poetry. A letter from Nur al-Din himself in the 1160s exhorts his military commanders to 'purify Jerusalem from the pollution of the cross' and he commissioned in Aleppo the building of a beautiful wooden pulpit (minbar) to commemorate his own role in the reconquest of the Holy City. He was deprived by death in 1174 from fulfilling his aim and installing the pulpit where he wanted it to be placed – in the Aqsa Mosque.

Thereafter, during much of his military career – from 1174 until his recapture of Jerusalem in 1187 – Saladin presented Jerusalem as the supreme goal of his anti-Frankish propaganda. But first came the summit of his military jihad, his celebrated victory on 4 July 1187 over the forces of the king of Jerusalem, Guy de Lusignan, at the battle of Hattin, fought near the

Figure 17.8 Minbar of Nur al-Din, placed by Saladin in the Aqsa Mosque, Jerusalem, in 1187 (destroyed by arson in 1969)

western shore of the Sea of Galilee against the *salibiyyin* (the bearers of the cross), as the Muslim sources often called the Franks. This memorable event led to the ultimate triumph. One of Saladin's biographers, his 'spin-doctor', 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani, declares in a letter in 1186, with the confidence of

Figure 17.9 Muslim soldiers, with banners bearing the *shahada* (Muslim creed) text (*Maqamat* of al-Hariri, 1237)

imminent victory: 'The sabres of jihad rattle with joy. The Dome of the Rock rejoices in the good news that the Qu'ran of which it was deprived will return to it.' Choosing the best possible day to enter Jerusalem in triumph, Saladin waited to take possession of it until Friday 27 Rajab 583/2 October 1187, the anniversary of the Prophet's Night Journey into Heaven. This event was the climax of Saladin's career, the fulfilment of his jihad campaign. This supreme moment of his life is described by his biographers as 'the rebirth of Islam in the Holy Land'. The great gilded cross at the top of the cupola of the Dome of the Rock was pulled down as soon as possible by Saladin's men. As Ibn al-Athir records:

> When they reached the top a great cry went up from the city and from outside the walls, the Muslims crying Allahu akbar in their joy, whilst the Franks groaned in consternation and grief.

Saladin resisted the temptation to exact vengeance for the bloodshed of 1099 and was praised by Muslim and Crusader sources alike for his magnanimity towards the enemy in Jerusalem. In his triumphal sermon in 1187, the preacher Ibn Zaki, specially chosen for the occasion, proclaims: 'I praise Him . . . for his cleansing of His Holy House from the filth of polytheism and its pollutions.' On Saladin's behalf, his scribe, al-Qadi al-Fadil, wrote to the caliph in Baghdad about the conquest of Jerusalem, vigorously attacking Christian defilement and the doctrine of the Trinity:

> 'The earth of Jerusalem has become pure, when once it was like a menstruating woman. God has become the One when he was the Three.' This triumphal letter in Saladin's name to the caliph also records that after the battle of Hattin 'Not one of the Templars survived.'

It would take some time to transform Frankish Jerusalem into a place of Muslim visitation. Saladin made a good start. He set about purifying and re-Islamising the Holy City. Al-Maqrizi describes this process in some detail:

> The beautiful pulpit was brought from Aleppo and set up in the Aqsa Mosque. All traces of Christian worship were removed, and the Rock was cleansed with several loads of rose water. Incense was diffused and carpets spread.

Figure 17.10 South façade of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem (before 1149)

The re-Islamising of Jerusalem also involved erecting new buildings – madrasas, a hospital and a Sufi hostel – and Saladin and his successors allocated pious bequests to support existing religious monuments as well as to establish new ones. A pragmatic attitude was shown to the Christians. According to al-Maqrizi, 'The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was closed and then opened and

a fee determined for those of the Franks who should visit it.' After his reconquest of Jerusalem, Saladin also allowed the Jews to settle there again and they remembered him as a 'second Cyrus'. The Spanish Jewish poet, Yehudah al-Harizi, who came to Jerusalem in 1216, found three Jewish groups there; they were from the coastal town of Ascalon, North Africa and France.

For the Crusader view of the two crowning moments of Saladin's career, the victory at Hattin and the conquest of Jerusalem in 1187, we are dependent on the inferior accounts of the continuators of William of Tyre. One of them, Ernoul, the squire of Balian of Ibelin, is able to present a favourable picture of Saladin, even in the bitter hour of defeat following the loss of Jerusalem. Ernoul praises Saladin's behaviour in Jerusalem after the conquest, pointing out his pity and kindness towards its defeated Christian inhabitants. Speaking of Saladin's magnanimity to the wives and daughters of knights in Jerusalem, Ernoul writes that he gave them so much that they praised God for it and broadcast to the world the kindness and honour which Saladin had done to them. Later, in 1192, after the truce with Richard, Saladin is shown in this same source as having pity towards Crusader lords.

Frankish–Muslim Coexistence from 1099 to 1187

The study of the Holy Land under Frankish rule provides a fascinating example of cultural symbiosis. The Frankish military conquerors from Europe came to the Holy Land with very different religious beliefs, languages, customs, and not least, physical appearance. But over the period of their political dominance in the Holy Land as proto-colonialists they were undoubtedly influenced by living cheek by jowl with Muslims.

Amongst the extant information about the ways in which the Franks adopted aspects of the Muslim way of life two accounts stand out particularly, the *Book of Learning by Example*, the autobiographical memoirs of the Arab Muslim nobleman, Usama b. Munqidh (d. 1198), and *The History of the Expedition to Jerusalem*, written by Fulcher of Chartres (d. 1127), a Christian priest who took part in the First Crusade and then worked for Baldwin I of Jerusalem. Other valuable sources include the writings of travellers who visited the Holy Land under Frankish domination.

In matters of intellect and, in particular, medicine, the Muslim sources express feelings of superiority over the Franks. The historian Joshua Prawer

commented long ago on the fact that the cream of European scholars did not make their way to the Holy Land when it was in Frankish hands and that no Frankish educational establishment appeared while they were there. This view is supported by Benjamin Kedar who tellingly describes the Frankish clergy as possessing 'lowbrow religiosity'.

Both Muslim and Frankish accounts of the military leaders, such as Richard the Lionheart, Saladin, Guy of Lusignan and Nur al-Din, show that both sides in the conflict shared similar chivalric values. On their side, the Muslims greatly admired the impressive castle-building skills of the Franks and their courage in war. But on an everyday level, the Franks adopted Muslim customs. They copied Muslim cooking, housing and clothing. They even abstained from eating pork and began to veil their own women. Muslim craftsmen made works of art for the upper echelons of Frankish society.

Talk of Frankish filth and pollution was not mere rhetoric. Just as the Middle Ages in Europe were described by the nineteenth-century French historian Jean Michelet as 'a thousand years without a bath', so the perception *and* the reality for Muslims were that the Franks paid little heed to personal hygiene.

The Muslim traveller Ibn Jubayr writes that Frankish Acre 'stinks and is filthy, being full of refuse and excrement'. In the course of time, as Usama b. Munqidh relates with great relish and wit, some Frankish knights eagerly embraced the delights of soap and the bathhouse. However, they did not always conform to Muslim rules either inside and outside the *hammam* and in a series of 'tall stories', told in a condescending and satirical tone, Usama criticises them for being ill-bred and boorish and lacking in proper pride towards their women folk.

On the other hand, Usama readily admits that he had friends amongst the Templars in Jerusalem who allowed him to pray in a corner of the Temple of the Lord (the Aqsa Mosque). Clearly he was not deterred from being in their company, despite the evidence of their filthy bodies, provided by none other than St Bernard of Clairvaux who describes the Templars as follows: 'Never overdressed, they bathe rarely and are dirty and hirsute, tanned by the coat of mail and the sun.' Yet it was these very same unwashed knights who were given permission to use the Aqsa Mosque as their headquarters and who stayed there from 1118 to 1187.

In short, the Franks who *stayed* in the Holy Land became acclimatised, 'orientalised', as Fulcher of Chartres writes:

> Consider, I pray, and reflect how in our time God has transferred the West into the East, for we who were Occidentals now have been made Orientals. He who was a Roman or a Frank is now a Galilaean, or an inhabitant of Palestine. One who was a citizen of Rheims or of Chartres now has been made a citizen of Tyre or of Antioch. We have already forgotten the places of our birth . . . Therefore why should one who has found the East so favourable return to the West?

After Saladin: the Ayyubids and the Holy Land, 1193–1250

The period in which Saladin's descendants, the Ayyubids, ruled the Holy Land can be seen as rather an anti-climax or at best a time of transition before the return of firm government under the Mamluks of Egypt in 1250. The Ayyubids governed a loose-knit and often discordant confederacy. They called themselves in their public discourse '*mujahidun*' but even in their own time they were accused of being lukewarm in their efforts to fight the Franks. The famous Arab chronicler Ibn al-Athir (d. 1233) writes about the Ayyubids as follows: 'Amongst the rulers of Islam we do not see one who wishes to wage jihad.' The Crusader author of the *Rothelin Continuation of William of Tyre* also expresses an extremely negative view of Ayyubid rule; speaking of Saladin and his successors, he writes of Saladin: 'He disinherited many people and conquered more lands than all the unbelieving Muslims who ever lived before him. All his life he succeeded in everything he undertook, but as soon as he died his children lost nearly all of it.'

Whilst it is easy to be critical of Ayyubid rule in the Holy Land after Saladin, it should be emphasised that the years 1200–50 were a deeply turbulent period for many countries, from Central Asia to Egypt and Anatolia. The Ayyubids tried to hold onto power at a time when there were dangers from both west and east. There was always the fear of further crusades from Europe. But far more terrifying was the threat of the coming of the world-conquering Mongols from the east. Ibn al-Athir in his account of the year 1219–20 called the Mongol threat the most dangerous that Islam had ever experienced. In the wake of the conquests of Genghis Khan and his successors, seismic demo-

graphic shifts westwards began. Soon, on the borders of Ayyubid territory, there lurked groups of Qipchaq Turkish nomads from Central Asia, known as the Khwarazmians, displaced by the incoming Mongols, and themselves terrifying horse nomads. And refugees from Afghanistan and Iran began to flee westwards into Anatolia.

Saladin did not bequeath a centralised state to his heirs; on the contrary, in time-honoured steppe tradition he divided his empire amongst his sons and other close male relatives. It was soon clear that Saladin's brother, al-'Adil, who had been his main adviser and had been especially involved in drawing up the peace treaty with Richard the Lionheart in 1192, would gain the upper hand. He placed his sons in important centres of power – Aleppo, Damascus and Cairo – and he concluded peace treaties with the Frankish ruler Amalric from 1204 to 1212. The Mamluk historian al-Maqrizi gives al-'Adil fulsome praise: 'The Franks made peace with him on account of the strength of his resolution, his alert prudence, his capacious intellect, his resource in stratagems.'

When the Fifth Crusade arrived in Egypt (not in the Holy Land) in 1218, al-'Adil despatched his son al-Mu'azzam 'Isa to defend Jerusalem. At that point, al-Mu'azzam 'Isa decided to dismantle the walls of the city in case it should fall into Frankish hands again. The Crusader chronicler Oliver of Paderborn (d. 1227) laments this action, saying: 'In the year of grace 1219, Jerusalem, the queen of cities, which seemed impregnably fortified, was destroyed within and without by Coradin [that is, al-Mu'azzam].' On the death of his father that same year al-Mu'azzam governed the Holy Land from his centre at Damascus. His brother al-Kamil ruled Egypt.

Dreadful events followed. After the Fifth Crusade the Ayyubid unity that had prevailed in the face of this danger dissipated. In a fateful move in 1226, prompted by fear of his brother, al-Kamil, al-Mu'azzam invited the terrifying new power in the east, the Khwarazmians, to come and provide him with military help. For his part, al-Kamil asked the German emperor, Frederick II of Sicily, to support him. Although al-Mu'azzam was in charge of Jerusalem, al-Kamil offered to hand it over to Frederick. On the death of al-Mu'azzam the following year, al-Kamil seized Jerusalem and Nablus. By 1228 al-Kamil would have been strong enough to take the Holy Land for himself but he had already offered it to Frederick. So in what is most

probably the most controversial episode of Ayyubid history, the notorious peace treaty of Jaffa, signed on 18 February 1229 and lasting for ten years, Jerusalem and Bethlehem were handed back to the Franks, whilst only the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock were retained as a Muslim enclave, so that Muslims could continue to pray there. Frederick entered the Holy City in triumph on 17 March that year; he stayed there for only two nights, and on 1 May he left the Holy Land. However, Frederick is shown in the Muslim sources as behaving in a deferential way towards Islam – his long familiarity with Muslims in Sicily would have prepared him for how to behave in Jerusalem.

In the 1240s Jerusalem was the victim of frequent changes of overlord, both Ayyubid and Frank. Internal disunity and rivalries caused individual Ayyubid rulers to make alliances with the Franks against their own family members. Thus the Franks re-acquired Jerusalem still unfortified briefly in the winter of 1243–4. Once again they had the right to celebrate Christian rituals in the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque. The Crusader chronicler Matthew Paris (d. 1259) reports that 'the holy city of Jerusalem is now inhabited by Christian people, all the Saracens being driven out'. The Muslim chronicler, Ibn Wasil (d. 1298) describes the situation he himself witnessed at that time in Jerusalem: 'I saw monks and priests in charge of the Rock and I saw bottles of wine for the ceremony of the Mass.' He is deeply disturbed by these Christian practices, which he says have rendered Muslim prayer in the Holy sanctuary invalid. But the Franks were destined to hold the city for only a few months.

As if the previous sordid deals struck over Jerusalem were not enough, Jerusalem was finally returned to Muslim rule in a way which was thoroughly discreditable to Islam and to those Muslims who in Saladin's time had made such sacrifices for the Holy City. After a summons from Najm al-Din Ayyub, the last Ayyubid sultan in Cairo, groups of Khwarazmians crossed the Euphrates and created havoc wherever they went. In the early summer of 1244, they moved south into the Holy Land and arrived outside Jerusalem on 11 July 1244.

When the Franks heard about the advance of the Khwarazmians, some 6,000 of them left Jerusalem in fear, but only 300 of them escaped the Khwarazmians who then entered the city 'which stood quite empty'. They

Figure 17.11 Frederick II of Sicily, medieval Renaissance man par excellence

attacked the garrison in the Tower of David which held out until 23 August 1244 when it surrendered on the promise of safe conduct. The invading forces killed those Christians still in the city, not sparing any of them and taking their women and children into captivity.

The devastation caused in the Holy City was terrible. Both Muslim and Christian chroniclers were ashamed at what had been perpetrated by the Khwarazmians who, after all, were at least nominally Muslims. The Khwarazmians entered the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and destroyed the tomb which Christians believed to be that of the Messiah, removing the marble framework which enclosed the tomb and its carved columns. They also massacred monks and nuns in the Armenian convent of St James, desecrated Christian tombs, including those of the Frankish kings that were in the church, and burned the bones of the dead. For Matthew Paris rhetoric knows no bounds, saying that in the Holy City the Khwarazmians 'cut the throats, as of sheep doomed to the slaughter, of the nuns, and of aged and infirm men'. The Ayyubid sultan Najm al-Din Ayyub condemned the

excesses of the Khwarazmians in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in a letter dated 15 August 1246, addressed to Pope Innocent IV. He said that what had happened there in the way of destruction and desecration had occurred without his knowledge or presence. However, that same year the infamous battle of Harbiyya (La Fourbie), as serious militarily as Hattin, gave the victory to Najm al-Din Ayyub with his Khwarazmian allies over the troops of the Syrian Ayyubids and Franks. This ill-fated collaboration of Syrian Ayyubids and Crusaders was strongly criticised by the Muslim chronicler Sibt b. al-Jawzi (d. 1256) who bemoaned the fact that the Muslims had fought with crosses over their heads, and with Christian priests offering them the sacrament.

After the battle of Harbiyya, a terrible disaster that accelerated the fall of the Ayyubid dynasty, Jerusalem was governed from Egypt. Ayyubid pragmatism toward the Holy City lasted to the very end of their rule; in his testament, Najm al-Din Ayyub, counsels his son, the last Ayyubid sultan of Egypt, as follows: 'If they [the Franks] demand the coast and Jerusalem from you, give them these places without delay on condition that they have no foothold in Egypt.' Clearly the centre of power had shifted to the south.

The end of the dynasty was now fast approaching. Najm al-Din Ayyub died in November 1249 and his slave troops (*mamluk*s) staged a *coup d'état* in which they appointed one of their own number as sultan. The Mamluk dynasty had begun to rule.

Looking back over the Ayyubid period, it should be borne in mind that the story of Ayyubid rule in the Holy Land is not just one of disruption and bargaining over the ownership of Jerusualem. It is a saga of desperate survival tactics in a period of great external dangers, when the threat of more crusades from Europe did not recede and when the even more terrible spectre of the Mongol invasions loomed ominously on the horizon. Against this background individual Ayyubid princes could occasionally unite against a common foe. More often, however, what motivated them was sheer pragmatism as they sought grimly to keep hold of their own territories in whatever way they could. Maintaining control of the Holy Land was a secondary consideration in such a situation and its generally unhappy fate in much of the Ayyubid period may rather be seen as a symbol of the widespread fragility of power, both Muslim and Crusader, in these troubled years.

Figure 17.12 A Mamluk amir dressed to kill

Moreover, Saladin's Ayyubid heirs, men of much lesser vision and prone to endless political squabbles, had little appetite for ambitious construction projects in the Holy Land. Their focus quickly shifted north and south, to Aleppo, Damascus and Cairo, and that is where their most important buildings are still to be found. But under Mamluk tutelage (1250–1517) Jerusalem was once again transformed beyond recognition, this time by over sixty Muslim monuments, again overwhelmingly of religious function. No Outremer castle held out for longer than six weeks after the Mamluks had begun a siege. Castles also fell to the Mamluks because the inhabitants were offered safe conduct if they surrendered. The Mamluk sultan, al-Ashraf Khalil, laid siege to Acre on 6 April 1291. The city was taken on 18 May. Many of the inhabitants of the city had already left for Cyprus, but the thousands that remained were killed. Very soon the whole Levantine coast finally reverted to Muslim rule exercised by the Mamluks.

Concluding Remarks

Three Frankish states managed to implant themselves precariously for almost two centuries in alien territory far from Europe. The length of the Frankish occupation of individual cities within the Holy Land varied considerably; for example, Nablus from 1099 to 1187, Caesarea from 1101 to 1187 and 1191 to 1265, and Tyre from 1124 to 1291. This was possible initially because of the strength of Frankish religious ideology and, by contrast, Muslim disunity and lack of strong leadership under the banner of jihad. The network of castles, the military strength of the Knightly Orders, and the assistance of the Italian maritime states in bringing men and supplies to the Holy Land presented a formidable stumbling block to Muslim success in ousting the Franks definitively in the first half of the twelfth century. However, under the command of Nur al-Din, Saladin and Baybars, the Holy Land gradually reverted to Muslim rule, culminating in the fall of Acre, the last bastion of Frankish power on traditionally Muslim soil.

From the death of Saladin onwards, the Holy Land somehow lost its holiness and it reverted under his descendants to the subsidiary political status it had always had since the beginning of Muslim rule in the Middle East. The Ayyubid princes prioritised Egypt and Syria. That, after all, was where the major cities were. The Holy Land contained no city that could

serve as a political hub for them. They focused on Aleppo, Damascus and Cairo as their centres of power. Jerusalem, which had served as a religious and political capital for the Frankish Kingdom, degenerated in Ayyubid times into a political bargaining tool in a power game played between al-Kamil and Frederick II of Sicily. Even worse than that, Jerusalem then became the target for an abominable invasion and desecration perpetrated by rampaging nomadic Khwarazmian Turks who dared to call themselves Muslims. For them even Jerusalem's sacred status meant nothing.

The Crusades were not just about war. The Franks and the Muslims lived cheek by jowl in the Holy Land for almost two centuries and there were frequent periods of peace between them. The Frankish states were skilful in making alliances with neighbouring Muslim states, and, for a while in the Ayyubid period in the thirteenth century, the remaining Frankish Crusader states – the Kingdom of Jerusalem at Acre, the Principality of Antioch and the County of Tripoli – almost became an integral part of the political landscape of the Holy Land.

The Mamluks of Egypt, on their seizure of power in 1250, recognised the importance of Jerusalem as the third most holy city in Islam, and they cared for it as a core centre of Muslim piety and pilgrimage. Politically, however, the Holy Land, with its lack of commercial and economic clout and with its absence of large urban centres, was destined thereafter to be ruled until modern times from Cairo and then Istanbul. Fortunately for the Muslims the Holy City still houses Mamluk and Ottoman monuments which testify to the loving care lavished on it by these two long-lived Muslim Turkish dynasties.

18

The Assassins in Fact and Fiction: The Old Man of the Mountain

Perhaps no other group from the Middle Ages has sparked modern-day imaginations like the Assassins. Viewed as mystical and deadly, they were said to be led in Syria by a charismatic figure known as the Old Man of the Mountain. But what can we really know about them? The defining narrative in medieval times about the myth of the Old Man of the Mountain (Shaykh al-Jabal) is that of Marco Polo, which was written down in the early fourteenth century. The account consists of legendary and folkloric material that had been spread across the Middle East and Europe by Sunni Muslims, Crusaders, and Jewish, Christian and Muslim travellers who visited Syria, Egypt, the Holy Land and Iran from the twelfth century onwards. Marco Polo's account remained the definitive one for many centuries. He does not name the geographical location of the territory of the Old Man of the Mountain – he just names it as a country of Mulahet, which he says means 'heretics' according to the law of the Saracens. Here is a typical passage from Marco Polo's account:

> The Old Man was called in their language Alaedin . . . He had made in a valley between two mountains the biggest and most beautiful garden that was ever seen . . . There were ladies there and damsels, the loveliest in the world, unrivalled at playing every sort of instrument and at singing and dancing. And he gave his men to understand that this garden was Paradise . . . No-one ever entered the garden except those who he wished to make Assassins . . . The Old Man kept with him at his court all the youths from 12 to 20 . . . He used to put some of these youths in this Paradise four

at a time, or ten or twenty . . . He gave them draughts that sent them to sleep on the spot. Then he had them taken and put in the garden, where they were wakened. When they awoke and found themselves in there . . . they believed they were really in Paradise . . . He entices them in a strange manner with such hopes and with promises of such pleasures with eternal enjoyment that they prefer rather to die than to live. Many of them, even when standing on a wall, will jump off at his nod or command, and, shattering their skulls, die a miserable death.

Figure 18.1 A twelfth–thirteenth-century Persian figurine of a horseman (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Figure 18.2 The ruins of the Nizari fortress of Alamut, Iran (© Valery Shanin/Shutterstock)

Figure 18.3 A small, richly decorated knife, probably Afghan, 1000–1200 (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

We have several other medieval accounts – including those by Benjamin of Tudela, Burchard of Strasbourg, Arnold of Lübeck and Gregory Bar Hebraeus – that offer similar stories: this Old Man of the Mountain was a mysterious figure who commanded the black arts of magic. His followers were said to follow no laws, to abuse women and to eat the flesh of swine. The pejorative name that they were given, first by Sunni Muslims and then by the Crusaders, was *hashishiyyun*; it came to mean 'those who consume hashish'. In English this word would evolve to become Assassins.

Origins of the Nizaris

The actual history of the people that would be called Assassins begins in Egypt in the last years of the eleventh century. At that time, Egypt was ruled by the Fatimid dynasty, who followed Isma'ilism, a branch of Shi'a Islam. In 1094 the Fatimid caliph Imam al-Mustansir bi'llah died. Although the caliph had wanted his eldest son Abu Mansur Nizar to succeed him, the vizier engineered a palace coup to enthrone a much younger son who could be more easily controlled. Nizar and his supporters were able to raise an army to fight for the caliphate, but in 1095 they were defeated in battle. Nizar was captured, taken to Cairo and executed.

However, Nizar's followers would not accept the new Fatimid ruler, and they pledged allegiance to Nizar's son al-Hadi b. Nizar. They would leave Egypt and go to Alamut, a remote fortress in northern Iran, under the leadership of Hasan-i Sabbah, where they set up their own state. Henceforth they adopted the name Nizaris.

Nizari missionaries from Iran began to infiltrate Syria from the early 1100s onwards. They tried to spread their message in the key cities of Aleppo and Damascus, hoping to gain the support of the many other Shi'a communities in the region. After unsuccessful attempts to seize power in these cities, the Nizaris in Syria withdrew in the 1130s to the relative safety of the mountains, heading for the area between Lattakieh and Hama. There the Syrian Nizaris displayed a remarkable ability to adapt to a difficult, and indeed hostile, environment, and to survive in it as a hated and beleaguered minority. They were helped, of course, by the fragmentation and weakness of Syria in the years following the First Crusade, a situation that lasted until the revitalisation of the area under the strong rule of the two great twelfth-century 'Counter-Crusade' leaders, Nur al-Din and Saladin.

Just as the Crusaders in Outremer survived as minorities in the Sunni Muslim-majority areas of Egypt, Syria and the Holy Land, so too the Syrian Nizaris within a few decades adopted the strategy of occupying existing castles or obtaining new ones in under-populated northern Syria – castles such as Qadmus (1132–3), al-Kahf (1135–6) and, above all, Masyaf (1140). It is hard to know how many castles they controlled – one historian suggests twenty-four, while another believes it was about seventy. Many of these

fortifications were very close together, forming a virtually impregnable zone. Small wonder that the Syrian Nizaris were able to exercise a political influence out of all proportion to their size.

Rashid al-Din Sinan

After an early period of establishing a firm foothold in the mountains of northern Syria far from their mother centre in Iran, the Syrian Nizaris acquired their most famous and long-ruling leader, Rashid al-Din Sinan, the Old Man of the Mountain (Shaykh al-Jabal) – a title that suggests both noble stock and an aura of mystery. He took over the leadership at Masyaf in 1169, ruling there for thirty years. He found himself in conflict, not only with three Crusader states, but also with the strong Sunni Muslim military barons Nur al-Din and Saladin.

We know a few details about Sinan. He was born in Basra and worked as a school teacher before becoming a missionary. He was sent from Iran to Syria in 1162, but took no leadership for seven years. He would go on to rule the Syrian Nizari community until his death in 1193; during his time in power he had acted independently of the Nizaris based in Iran.

We have only one account that tells the story of Sinan's life from the Nizari point of view. It was written in 1324 by a Syrian Nizari scholar named Abu Firas and is called *The splendid exploits of Rashid al-Din Sinan*. This account, not surprisingly, is hagiographical, full of legendary anecdotes about Sinan, but it also provides factual information corroborated by the chronicles of medieval Sunni Muslim, anti-Nizari writers. The work is a fascinating source, but it should be used with great caution. One passage from it is, however, especially significant:

> Many common ignorant fools think that it is thanks to his knowledge of magic that the Lord Rashid al-Din practised these marvels. Well, he confounded them all and reduced them to silence, not by science or magic but by the force of truth and conviction, by his demonstrations and by the quotations which he pronounced from Qur'anic verses.

In the context of the many hagiographical episodes that Abu Firas recounts in the biography of his hero, this picture of his religious credentials has a convincing ring to it.

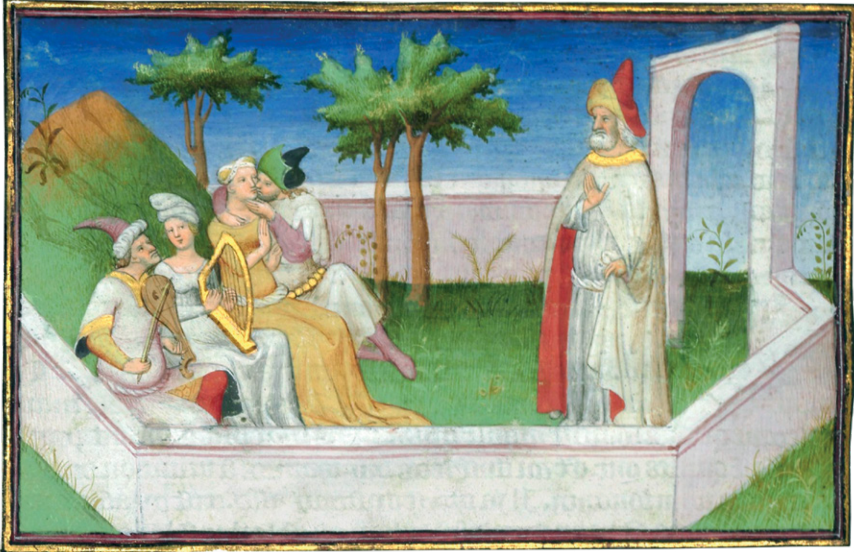

Figure 18.4a The Old Man of the Mountain, Marco Polo, *Travels* (© Bibliothèque nationale MS 810, fol. 16v, 17r)

Figure 18.4b The Old Man of the Mountain, Marco Polo, *Travels* (© Bibliothèque nationale MS 810, fol. 16v, 17r)

Within his community Sinan seems to have organised his followers with great skill. The account of Abu Firas describes him as possessing extraordinary powers, such as clairvoyance, prophecy and telepathy. He did not need a personal bodyguard, ruling by the force of his character alone and inspiring devotion and fear alike among his subjects. He was a man of few words, preferring instead to assume grand poses. He was, for example, never seen eating, and he cast no reflection in water. There are dozens of chapters devoted to his seemingly miraculous exploits, whether these be escaping assassination attempts against himself or being able to reply to letters before they were even delivered.

From the very beginning of his residence in Masyaf, Sinan is depicted by Abu Firas as a mysterious, eccentric personage. He arrived in Syria riding on

Figure 18.5 A quilted silk cap dating from the eleventh century (© Cleveland Museum of Art)

Figure 18.6 A riding coat, most likely Iranian, dating from 1200–1250 (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

a white donkey and wearing a headdress of striped Yemeni wool and shoes he had sewn himself. He did not announce himself as the new head of the Syrian Nizaris, preferring instead to await the death of the current incumbent. He would remain motionless for hours, with his lips mysteriously moving but with no sound coming out of them. However, despite this portrayal of him, Sinan had his feet firmly on the ground; for example, he positioned pigeon towers on mountaintops from which to send messages to the other citadels he governed. Clearly, then, he was a most formidable charismatic personality, and his actions would show him to be a worthy adversary in the struggle for power in the medieval Middle East.

It can be assumed with confidence that the Crusaders would not have had the slightest interest in Nizari doctrine, practice and proselytising, whilst

Sunni Muslims would have dismissed their doctrinal details with horror and contempt. Given the jihad-saturated atmosphere of twelfth-century Muslim writings, it is noteworthy that there is, it would seem, no mention of jihad in a Nizari context. The only allusion to such matters that I have found so far are the words of an unknown Nizari poet. Referring to the strategy of killing high-profile victims, which achieved maximum impact at minimal costs to the sect – a policy that the Syrian Nizaris had brought with them from Iran and a policy that made their name feared both in the Middle East and in Europe – the unknown poet writes:

> By a single warrior on foot, a king may be struck with terror, though he may own more than 100,000 horsemen.

This interesting line of poetry may well be an oblique allusion to the young men called *fida'is*, trained to perform acts of political murder with daggers as part of a strategy of intimidation.

Figure 18.7 Nizam al-Mulk's murder, 1092 (© Topkapı Palace Museum, *Jami' al-tawarikh*, Inv.H. 1653, fol. 360b)

Figure 18.8 Masyaf Castle, the headquarters of the Syrian Nizaris after 1141 (© Valery Shanin/Shutterstock)

Against Saladin

It must be admitted that both Crusader and Sunni Muslim chroniclers attribute almost every murder of important figures to Sinan's *fida'i*s (devoted followers). In a very short space of time, their small group caused a degree of fear and paranoia quite out of proportion to their small numbers.

Perhaps the most famous episodes concerning the Nizaris of Syria involve the rivalry between Sinan and Saladin. Saladin's predecessor Nur al-Din had already tried to attack Sinan's territory and had had, according to Abu Firas, the terrifying experience of finding a dagger on the ground near his head; on it he saw the words, 'If you do not leave tomorrow night, this dagger will be stuck in your belly'. But it was Saladin who became the target of the fiercest hostility, which took the form of two attempts on his life soon after he arrived in Syria from Cairo late in 1174.

Why should Saladin have been attacked by the Nizaris so soon after his seizure of power in Syria? In the tough power politics of twelfth-century Syria, the period immediately after the death of Nur al-Din presented a very

Figure 18.9 A coin bearing Saladin's image minted in Mayyafariqin (1169–93) (© Trustees of the British Museum)

good opportunity for Sinan to attack Saladin, a threatening newcomer who was trying to grab all the lands that had been carved out as an empire by Nur al-Din. Nur al-Din had died in 1174, having ruled for twenty-eight years. In that time he had never managed to achieve any great success against the Nizaris. But clearly a new military leader in the form of Saladin coming from Egypt should be stopped before his power became consolidated. Saladin left Egypt and arrived in Damascus in November 1174, under the guise of protecting the eleven-year-old son of Nur al-Din from his threatening cousins in Mosul. Sinan must have feared for the survival of the Nizari state in Syria when he saw the rising power of Saladin; this was truly a dangerous enemy.

Figure 18.10 The Old Man of the Mountain training Assassins (© British Library MS Royal 19 D I, fol. 70v).

The first assassination attempt on Saladin took place outside the walls of Aleppo early in 1175. It is not clear from the sources who instigated this attack. Was the family of Nur al-Din, whose territories Saladin was bent

Figure 18.11 Map of Nizari sites in Syria (karavansaraypublishers.com, Medieval Warfare)

on capturing, involved in this? Or the governor of Aleppo, Gümüshtegin? Had one of these two parties got in touch with Sinan? Or was it Sinan alone? The Sunni Muslim chronicler Ibn al-Jawzi suggests that the attempts on Saladin's life were the result of his aggression against Nizari villages in 1174–5. Whatever the truth, Saladin escaped unharmed on this occasion. Quite possibly, it was a united initiative from all three parties who saw Saladin as a dangerous foe, interfering in Syrian affairs.

The second attempt on Saladin's life took place in 1176; it was a much more terrifying incident and it seems likely to have come from Sinan alone. The following account comes from the chronicle of the Ayyubid dynasty by Ibn Wasil. During the siege of Azaz, Saladin was attacked whilst in a tent one night reviewing some troops and raising their morale. Some Nizaris, wearing military apparel, were in the group. One of them leapt out of the line and struck Saladin's head with a knife. Had it not been for his helmet the sultan would have been killed. Saladin tried to stop further blows but he could not prevent the assailant from striking him again and again in his neck, which was, however, protected by a chainmail collar. One of Saladin's *mamluk*s appeared and killed the assassin. That was not the end of the incident. A second assassin appeared and killed Saladin's commander Da'ud before being struck down himself. Two more assassins then came forward; one was killed by Saladin's brother and the fourth, fleeing from the tent, was torn to pieces by the crowd.

Ibn Wasil continues his most unusually long narrative of an assassination attempt with the following graphic description:

> The sultan rode to his tent, terrified by this event, with his blood flowing down his cheek and the collar of his chainmail wet. He hid himself away, took precautions and constructed around his tent something resembling a palisade to cover it. He sat in a wooden house, on his guard against the soldiery. Those whom he did not like (the look of) he sent away and those he recognised he allowed in.

It is well known that, despite the panegyrics of his biographers and his heroic reputation in medieval Europe for generosity and chivalric virtues, Saladin was capable of demonstrating great anger. The famous episode with Reynald of Châtillon after Hattin in Saladin's tent is just one example of his passionate nature when roused by feelings of personal vengeance. And what could be more personal than attacks on his own life? So it is not surprising that he sought reprisals against the Nizaris by besieging their centre of operations at Masyaf shortly after the second attempt to kill him.

But Saladin withdrew after only one week of the siege, and thereafter neither he nor Sinan embarked on aggressive action against the other for the rest of their lives. They died within a few months of each other in 1193. It

Figure 18.12 A murder shown in a fifteenth-century Iranian *Shahnama* manuscript (© Metropolitan Museum of Art)

does indeed seem probable that they came to some kind of non-aggression pact after Masyaf. After all, Saladin had been attacked in a terrifying manner on two occasions and was lucky to escape with his life. He must have been very fearful of further attempts to kill him. Thus the mighty Saladin, the public promoter of Sunni Islam and the eradication of heresy, was cornered into making a deal with the leader of the hated Nizari sect in Syria.

The Murder of Conrad of Montferrat

There is another high-profile assassination attempt that has been blamed on Rashid al-Din Sinan and his followers: the killing of Conrad, Marquis of Montferrat. This Italian nobleman had come to the Kingdom of Jerusalem in 1187 and quickly gained a reputation as a capable leader of Crusader forces. He also used his political connections to gain power in the kingdom, and by 1190 he was the de facto king of the Crusader state.

Conrad would find his share of enemies among the Crusaders, including the English king Richard I. In April 1192, Conrad was elected the official king of Jerusalem by the local barons, but before he could take the throne, he was attacked in the city of Tyre on 28 April 1192. The *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi* is one of several accounts that tells the story of what happened to Conrad:

> One day he had been given a friendly invitation to dine with the Bishop of Beauvais, and was returning peacefully from the feast, absolutely cheerful and good-humoured. He had reached the Toll-house when two young Assassins, unencumbered by cloaks, rushed up to him at great speed, stretched out the two knives which they held in their hands and stabbed him this way and that way in the stomach, mortally wounding him, before running off at full speed!

The chronicler notes that as Conrad fell dying from his horse, one of the attackers was immediately killed, while the other escaped to a nearby church. He was soon dragged out, interrogated and killed. This second attacker confessed that he had been sent by the Old Man of the Mountain to kill the Marquis, and that he and his colleague had 'been in the Marquis' service a long time, awaiting a suitable moment to carry out the deed'.

Accusations soon emerged against King Richard, believing that he was the real mastermind of the plot. Historians have also suggested that other Crusade leaders were responsible for the assassination. Meanwhile, sources from the Islamic world offer their own version of events. Ibn al-Athir, writing in the early thirteenth century, believed that it was Saladin that orchestrated the attack on Conrad. He offered Sinan money to kill both the Marquis and King Richard, but the Nizari leader only acted to kill Conrad, apparently concluding 'that Saladin should not have a mind untroubled by the Franks, and thus be free to deal with them'.

Figure 18.13 Conrad of Montferrat marries Isabella (© Bibliothèque nationale. Française 2824, fol. 173v)

Ibn al-Athir then goes on to offer his own account of the assassination:

Figure 18.14 The Mongol siege of Alamut in 1256 (© Bibliothèque nationale. MS Supplément Persan 206, fol. 149r)

He sent two men disguised as monks, who became associated with the Lord of Sidon and Balian's son the Lord of Ramla. They were both with the Marquis in Tyre. The two stayed with them for six months, making a show of piety. The Marquis became acquainted with them and trusted them. On the above date (28 April 1192) the Bishop at Tyre gave a banquet for the Marquis. He attended, ate his food and drank his wine and left. The two Batinis we have mentioned leapt on him and wounded him severely. One of them fled and entered a church to hide. It chanced that the Marquis was carried there to have his wound bound. This assassin attacked and slew him. Both Batinis were killed in due course.

Figure 18.15 The so-called 'Seljuq Battle Plate' dating from the early thirteenth century (© Freer Gallery of Art; photo: the author)

Figure 18.16 Rudkhan Castle, built by the Sassanids, rebuilt by the Nizaris (© Uskarp/Shutterstock)

What emerges from reading the various sources is that there is a jumble of different versions of who may have been involved in the killing, somehow conspiring with Rashid al-Din Sinan for his followers to carry out the deed. Meanwhile, the Nizaris themselves seemingly never responded to these accusations, for it was in their interest to stay silent and let their reputation as deadly foes spread throughout the region.

Rashid al-Din Sinan would die in 1193, but his successors would take on the title of Old Man of the Mountain. Their small state in the Syrian mountains would last until the 1260s, finally being defeated by the Mamluk leader Baybars. It was also around this time that the Mongols of the Ilkhanate conquered the Nizaris in Iran. However, the Nizari Isma'ili faith endured, despite centuries of oppression, and they are now mostly known through the Aga Khan, their spiritual leader.

Taking a look back at Rashid al-Din Sinan and his followers, it is certainly difficult to discern fact from fiction. One must keep in mind that the Syrian Nizaris were just a tiny group that were trying to survive in their mountain strongholds, which they achieved mostly through alliances and

compromises with their neighbours. It was more through diplomacy than warfare that they endured. Their alleged use of murder was exaggerated by their enemies, but this was a notion they did not want to dispel, for it helped to protect them. Those myths around the Assassins have endured long after their states were lost, but careful historical research can help to shed further light on who they really were.

19

Saladin's 'Spin Doctors'

I. Introduction

Saladin was the third, and easily the most famous, of the Muslim military commanders of the twelfth century who turned the tide and began to recapture the lands seized by the Crusaders from 1098 onwards. Saladin grew up in a Kurdish military family that served the Turkish barons who controlled the Middle East, and more especially Syria and the Holy Land. From the early eleventh century the nomadic Turks had swept from Central Asia right across the eastern Islamic world, and by the 1060s their military strength had pushed aside all opposition from the Persians and Arabs, whose lands they now ruled.

Severe religious and political disunity had made the Muslim world unable to withstand the onslaught of the First Crusade. Or to put it another way, the spirit of jihad had become forgotten. As a result, the Muslims saw with pain the rapid creation of four Crusader states on Middle Eastern soil. In 1099, the loss of Jerusalem, the third most holy city in Islam, with its two Muslim sacred monuments, the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, in particular caused great anguish. But it took the Muslims well over half a century to find the kind of military leadership they needed to begin to defeat the Crusaders and regain their lands.

The first two Muslim military commanders who achieved major successes against the Crusaders were father and son, the Turks Zengi and Nur al-Din. Those names, incidentally, tell a story. Zengi did indeed have a title – 'Imad al-Din, 'Support of Religion' – but was commonly referred to by his

given personal name, Zengi, whereas his son Mahmud was universally known by his title Nur al-Din, 'Light of Religion'. That difference spells the sea-change between the warlord and the wager of holy war, the *mujahid*. Saladin himself, raised in a Muslim Turkish military environment and serving Nur al-Din, was a Kurd whose family had originated from the Caucasus.[1] The way forward for Kurds in the twelfth century lay in service as mercenary soldiers, and that was Saladin's background. From 1171 onwards Saladin seized the territories of his Turkish predecessor and master, Nur al-Din – Egypt, Syria and Palestine. Saladin then built on the achievements of Nur al-Din. He acquired a power base with the help of his vast family network, won a famous victory against the Crusaders at the battle of Hattin in 1187 and that same year attained his crowning achievement – the reconquest of Jerusalem for Islam. He failed, however, to defeat the forces of Richard the Lionheart in the Third Crusade which immediately followed the Muslim reconquest of Jerusalem. Saladin died in 1193. But he had not finished the task. He had scotched the snake, not killed it. Indeed, the Crusaders were to remain in the Middle East for almost another century before the Mamluks of Egypt finally expelled them in 1291.[2]

The combination of Saladin and Richard has entranced western Europe ever since. Popular legend has linked them together and both have enjoyed heroic status until modern times. Saladin's reputation in medieval Europe was extremely high; he was praised for his magnanimity, and most unusually a portrait of him hangs in the Uffizi in Florence.[3]

Many people, then, have heard of Saladin, but why is he the best-known medieval Muslim in the West apart from Muhammad himself? The prosaic reality, underlined by scholars such as Ehrenkreutz and Holt in their writings about Saladin, is that in his time Saladin was no more than a regional warlord, certainly not a figure of pan-Islamic significance.[4] They would argue that had Saladin died just a year or two before his conquest of Jerusalem he would have been remembered as simply yet another military baron. It could also be pointed out that the Muslim success against the Crusaders was more the achievement of Nur al-Din (in sole power for twenty-eight years) rather than Saladin (in sole power for nineteen years), who built on the foundations of conquest that Nur al-Din had left him.[5] And unlike his illustrious predecessor, Nur al-Din, Saladin did not leave a significant

number of religious monuments in the Levant which testified to his commitment to Islam and the prosecution of jihad. Saladin is celebrated for just one outstanding achievement, his reconquest of Jerusalem for Islam.

In wider Islamic terms, moreover, Saladin had no great legacy to speak of; his nephew, al-Kamil, the Ayyubid sultan, surrendered Jerusalem to Frederick II of Sicily in 1229, and his own family dynasty foundered after fifty-seven years. The territories that he ruled were substantial but not vast. His reign was relatively short; he captured Jerusalem but not Outremer. So, his achievements were not colossal. Saladin has had his detractors,[6] and his key successes should indeed be placed alongside his reverses, the less savoury aspects of his career in Egypt and his harsh treatment of certain Crusader leaders and the Knightly Orders. So, with this curriculum vitae, how did Saladin garner such fame east and west? How did it happen? The answer in the Muslim east (the Christian west, from Crusader times onwards, is a different matter) lies with his three major advisers, his 'spin doctors'. So how did he attract these brilliant men? And how did they manage to burnish his reputation so successfully that the whole Sunni Muslim world subsequently accepted their story, and a number of twentieth-century Muslim leaders vied for the title of 'the Second Saladin'?

II. Short Biographies of Saladin's Three Spin Doctors

Firstly, al-Qadi al-Fadil (1135–1200).[7] Abu 'Ali 'Abd al-Rahim al-Baysani al-'Asqalani, al-Qadi al-Fadil – his title means 'the excellent judge'– was one of the most famous political and literary figures in medieval Islamic history. Born in Ascalon in 1135, he came from a family of judges (*qadi*s). His father sent him to Cairo in 1148 to study epistolary prose (*insha'*) and he worked as a trainee in the chanceries of Fatimid Alexandria and Cairo. He survived there precariously in the unstable decade which preceded the downfall of the Fatimid Isma'ili Shi'ite caliphate in 1171. Like many Fatimid officials and courtiers, the Qadi al-Fadil had been imprisoned for a while before being released by Saladin's uncle, Shirkuh, who had taken power in Egypt in 1169 on behalf of Nur al-Din, who was a devout Sunni.

After Shirkuh's death, Saladin took over the role of ruling Egypt as the vizier of the Fatimid caliph al-'Adid, and the Qadi al-Fadil gained favour with Saladin when he composed a grand diploma of investiture in this new role

for him.[8] After he had assisted Saladin in abolishing the Fatimid caliphate and restoring Egypt to Sunni Islam in 1171, the Qadi al-Fadil accompanied Saladin on his expeditions to Syria and he remained Saladin's most valued adviser for the rest of Saladin's life.

The medieval Muslim biographer Ibn Khallikan (d. 1282) writes that the Qadi al-Fadil was 'one of the ornaments of the age' who was 'always treated with the very highest favour' by Saladin.[9] For him, the years when he had to carry the heaviest responsibilities were 1188–91, when Saladin charged him with the management of the financial administration and the reorganisation of his army and his fleet. After Saladin's death in 1193, the Qadi al-Fadil lived in Cairo until his death in 1200. His tenure of the office of vizier – twenty-two years – was the longest of any vizier in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in the Levant. Most viziers found their high office to be a poisoned chalice.

Little is known of the early life of Saladin's second spin doctor, the Persian 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani (1125–1201). He was born in Isfahan in 1125 and studied Islamic religious sciences in Baghdad and Basra. He became secretary, first to Nur al-Din and then to Saladin himself. He was treated with great respect by both these men. 'Imad al-Din drew up letters equally well in Persian and Arabic. He tried to win the favour of Saladin by reciting eulogies to him. He wrote several books on history, including *Al-fath al-qussi fi'l-fath al-qudsi*,[10] which covers the fall of Jerusalem until Saladin's death, and *Al-barq al-shami* (*The Syrian Bolt of Lightning*), which describes Saladin's life and deeds from 1175 onwards.[11] He also wrote hundreds of poems and collected those of other writers in anthologies which filled ten volumes. He eventually became Saladin's secretary and enjoyed high favour. Thereafter he rarely left Saladin's side.

Saladin's third spin doctor, Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad (1145–1234), was born in Mosul.[12] His early career was the customary one of an aspiring young scholar of the Islamic sciences; he memorised the Qur'an in his youth and studied Islamic law, first in Mosul and then in Baghdad. In 1174 he returned home to Mosul where he was appointed professor in a madrasa there. In 1188, the year after Saladin's victory at the battle of Hattin and his reconquest of Jerusalem, Ibn Shaddad went on the pilgrimage to Mecca and he then visited Jerusalem and Hebron. Saladin had admired a work

written by Ibn Shaddad called *Fada'il jihad* (*The Merits of Jihad*), and when he learned of Ibn Shaddad's arrival in the Holy Land, he sent for him and invited him to join his entourage of specialist advisers.[13] Ibn Shaddad was soon given the important posts of *Qadi al-'askar* (judge of the army) and governor of Jerusalem. He also accompanied Saladin on his later campaigns to reconquer the Crusader-held ports on the Levantine coast. Saladin left Ibn Shaddad in charge of Jerusalem whenever he went to take a rest in Damascus, his favourite city.[14] When Saladin became very ill in 1192, he summoned Ibn Shaddad to come to him there and Ibn Shaddad was with him during his last illness.[15] After Saladin's death in 1193 Ibn Shaddad moved to Aleppo where he worked for one of Saladin's sons. He died in 1234.

It is important to note that Ibn Shaddad worked for Saladin for a much shorter time than the Qadi al-Fadil and 'Imad al-Din – a mere five years. But during that period he was most of the time in contact with Saladin, wherever he went. Ibn Shaddad's book about Saladin is called *Al-nawadir al-sultaniyya wa'l-mahasin Yusufiyya* (*The Sultan's Rare Deeds and Joseph-like Merits*).[16] This laudatory title contains a pun on the personal name of Saladin, that is, Joseph, who is highly praised in both the Old Testament and the Qur'an.

III. The Relationships of the Three Spin Doctors with Saladin

All three men have left copious written personal evidence of their roles in Saladin's life and work. There is no doubt that they treasured their privileged intimacy with him, and that they also had a clear sense of his historical significance. Details of their relationships with Saladin are also recorded at length in contemporary and later medieval primary Arabic chronicles.

The Qadi al-Fadil

It will be convenient to begin with the Qadi al-Fadil. Whatever the primary and contingent purpose of the official letters, diplomas and other government documents that he prepared, another crucial motive was ever-present, namely to build up Saladin's political profile. In this respect, although 'Imad al-Din's written output was enormous, it was the work of al-Qadi al-Fadil which was without doubt continuously more important in matters of state. Al-Qadi al-Fadil is said to have kept a diary for thirty-six years (from 1164 to 1199). Moreover, the complete collection of the letters of the Qadi al-Fadil,

of which all were considered technical masterpieces of elevated chancery prose, is said to have comprised not less than 100 volumes. Whilst this statement may be a rhetorical exaggeration, it is important to note that even today there survive literally hundreds of official letters, diplomas and decrees which bear the name of al-Qadi al-Fadil and which are still preserved in unedited manuscripts in London, Beirut, Paris and Tübingen. Already in his own lifetime, the epistolary style of al-Qadi al-Fadil gained him an extraordinary reputation. As Saladin's counsellor and secretary, and as the head of his chancellery, he was the sultan's right-hand man. Saladin very soon found in al-Qadi al-Fadil a man of diverse capabilities and immense energy who became indispensable to him. According to his friend and colleague, 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani:

> Under the administration of al-Qadi al-Fadil things were stable . . . Saladin was afraid that some mishap might happen in al-Qadi al-Fadil's absence, and whenever they were parted for a long time, Saladin was apprehensive about dealing with matters alone.[17]

Once Saladin had seized full independent power in Egypt and broken away from his master Nur al-Din in Syria, there was a pressing need for him to gain legitimacy quickly. In the early years of his independent rule, after the death of Nur al-Din in 1174, his regime, under the skilful hand of the Qadi al-Fadil, relied heavily on many official letters written by him and sent in many directions, and especially to the Sunni caliph in Baghdad, to spread his jihad propaganda and to communicate with the different areas of his growing empire in Syria, which he seized from the family of Nur al-Din. The letters of the Qadi al-Fadil would be read out to the individuals to whom they were addressed but they were also read out in public places, such as in the mosques, as well as in the camps and citadels of the minor Turkish military barons who gradually allied themselves with Saladin. Again, the evidence of 'Imad al-Din is valuable here; he writes that the Qadi al-Fadil

> conducted the empire by his counsels, and fastened the pearls (of style) on the thread (of discourse); when he pleased, he could compose in a day, nay, in a single hour, documents which, were they preserved, would be considered by masters of the epistolary art as the most precious materials they could possess.[18]

The Qadi al-Fadil wrote decrees after towns were conquered; a typical example is the one he sent on Saladin's behalf to Aleppo in 1183. This document allowed protection and fair treatment for the Jews and Christians living there and permitted them to keep their jobs in the administration.

So much for the superb administrative work of the Qadi al-Fadil in support of Saladin. It is perhaps surprising that he also found time to write poetry. But it should be noted too that Saladin himself is reported to have listened regularly to recitations of poetry.[19] The Qadi al-Fadil's poetic output is mentioned in the primary Arabic sources as being spectacularly large;[20] according to one Arabic chronicler,[21] Sibt b. al-Jawzi, the Qadi al-Fadil composed 100,000 verses of poetry. Such an exaggerated number as this is clearly implausible but it is evident from a range of sources that the Qadi al-Fadil did indeed write a large amount of poetry, and in various genres, such as panegyrics, satires and religious odes. When young, he had memorised quantities of early Arabic poetry, and this knowledge enriched his own poetic style.

Moreover, in the often-poisonous atmosphere at court, full of competitors and rivals for power, the Qadi al-Fadil wrote satirical poems taunting those who cruelly mocked his physical disability. He was portrayed by his contemporaries as ugly. He had a hunchback which he used to conceal in a shawl-like garment worn over his head and shoulders.[22] A Syrian poet, Ibn 'Unayn, did not hesitate to mock al-Qadi al-Fadil's physical appearance, saying: 'Our sultan is lame, his secretary ['Imad al-Din] is bleary-eyed and his vizier [al-Qadi al-Fadil] is a *hunchback*.'[23]Another rival poet, this time a Moroccan called al-Wahrani, also wrote light verse of a sharply malicious kind, referring to al-Qadi al-Fadil, though not by name, as 'strange-looking with neither a head or a neck. His face is sunk in his chest and his beard in his stomach'.[24]

After 1184, when Saladin finally focused intensively on fighting the Crusaders and expelling them from the Holy City, the Qadi al-Fadil, not surprisingly at this crucial time, concentrated on spreading the message of Saladin's jihad ideology in his letters. And after Jerusalem had been reconquered, he wrote joyful, passionate and triumphant lines to the Sunni caliph in Baghdad, glorifying Saladin's achievements, vigorously emphasising his removal of the Christian defilement of the Holy City and attacking the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

Ibn Khallikan cites a letter of the Qadi al-Fadil to the Sunni caliph, al-Nasir, in Baghdad about the conquest of Jerusalem.[25] It is extremely long, enriched with Qur'anic references covering nine pages. It is full of jubilation, not only because Saladin has conquered but also because Islam has triumphed. Its phrasing, though lofty, is not too baroque or overblown:

> The affairs of Islam have taken an excellent turn, and the faith of its followers is now fixed by the most evident proofs . . . In this country, the true faith was like a stranger in a foreign land, but now, it finds itself at home . . . The order of God has been executed in despite of the infidels . . . God's promise of making his religion triumph over all the others received its fulfilment . . . The Holy Land has become the pure one, after being in a state of impurity; there the only God is now one, He being one who, according to them, was the third. The temples of infidelity have been overturned and the fangs of polytheism are now plucked out.

'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani

It is now time to move to 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani.[26] He was one of those authors who would never use three words when 300 would do. As the French historian, Claude Cahen, writes: 'Imad al-Din is an embarrassing author. A stylistic virtuoso . . . It is often impossible to distinguish in his writings between what comes from history and what is stylistic acrobatics.'[27] Henri Massé, who translated *Al-fath al-qussi* into French, speaks of the florid rhetoric of 'Imad al-Din's state documents and set pieces of eulogy, but he also adds that 'Imad al-Din writes other passages which are striking in their sober vigour.[28]

However, the rhetorical literary style in medieval Arabic and Persian prose-writing has received very little true appreciation from Western scholars, partly because it is so difficult to read and partly because it sacrifices content to form. For example, Francesco Gabrieli, who courageously translated excerpts from one of the books of 'Imad al-Din about Saladin, spoke of his 'wearisome obscurities'. [29]

'Imad al-Din has gained a certain notoriety for the prurient piece of baroque pornography[30] which he wrote about the arrival of 300 Crusader women in the Levant; his tone is one of gleeful outrage:

> There arrived by ship three hundred lovely Frankish women, full of youth and beauty, assembled from beyond the sea and offering themselves for sin . . . They glowed with ardour for carnal intercourse. They were all licentious harlots, proud and scornful, who took and gave, foul-fleshed and sinful, singers and coquettes . . . ardent and inflamed, tinted and untinted, desirable and appetising.[31]

And this high-flown licentious rhyming prose continues for two more pages in similar vein. Even in English translation the virtuosity of this passage, saturated in metaphor and simile, compels astonishment. But in Arabic it attains a different level altogether, for the puns, the alliterations, the assonances, come thick and fast and their cumulative impact is simply overwhelming. The whole passage is one long anti-Crusader propagandistic, lascivious coloratura aria delivered at full throttle. It reveals to the full ʻImad al-Din showing off his egotism and pride.

Other aspects of ʻImad al-Din's brilliant mind concern his portrayal of Saladin. Straightforward narratives of events in his career are found in the Muslim chronicles of the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries. But ʻImad al-Din's accounts are contemporary. He lived through the heights of Saladin's successes against the Crusaders; he was there with Saladin or heard about the events from eyewitnesses. He then presented them in his own inimitable fashion, in poetic prose which was meant to be recited aloud to a scholarly elite at court or in the mosques.

ʻImad al-Din mentions that he worked with Saladin every evening, discussing matters of state:

> Saladin was very fond of sitting with his particular friends from amongst men of intelligence . . . If he needed a letter written . . . he would dictate what he wanted to me to write and I would remain awake that night and bring it to him in the morning.[32]

ʻImad al-Din's book about Saladin's life from the fall of Jerusalem in 1187 until his death in 1193 is an elaborate eulogy. In it, Saladin is depicted as an ideal Muslim ruler, pious, just, generous, a fighter for the faith. This work begins in March 1187. ʻImad al-Din writes that he will deal only with the period which he knows and which he has seen with his own eyes. For exam-

ple, only a few hours after Saladin's victory at Hattin, 'Imad al-Din went to survey the battlefield. He mentions explicitly Saladin's ruthless treatment of the Templars and the Hospitallers who had fought at Hattin. Nor does 'Imad al-Din gloss over Saladin's involvement in the killing of his arch-enemy, Reynald of Châtillon. He writes that after the victory at Hattin, Saladin summoned Reynald. He went straight up to him, struck his shoulder with his sword and then ordered his head to be cut off.[33]

'Imad al-Din is at his most eloquent when he writes about Saladin's death. Indeed, his obituary notice is a linguistic tour de force; it is extremely long; it contains many pages of heavy, highly elaborate, full-blown, florid rhetorical prose, piled high, as usual, but imbued with feelings of grief and deep affection.

Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad

Finally, let us turn to the third member of this distinguished triumvirate of Saladin's devoted advisers, Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad. He wrote a very moving and detailed personal biography of Saladin in a style which is simpler than the writings of the Qadi al-Fadil or 'Imad al-Din. The work is in two parts: the first discusses in detail Saladin's qualities and especially his devotion to Islam, and the second is a history of his conquests.[34]

Part 1 of the book is a romanticised idealistic view of Saladin's personal commitment to Islam; his piety, his love of justice (every Monday and Thursday he sat in public to administer justice), his generosity (when he died his treasury was almost empty), his courage in battle, his endurance of frequent ill-health and other virtues. Part 2 is a very detailed account of the history of Saladin's conquests. Ibn Shaddad describes the battle of Hattin in much milder panegyric than that used by the Qadi al-Fadil and 'Imad al-Din. He does not elaborate on Saladin's killing of the Hospitallers and Templars. He just notes soberly that he spared none of them. As for the reconquest of Jerusalem, Ibn Shaddad is overjoyed. He provides ample details of this momentous event, but without the fanfare given to it by the Qadi al-Fadil or 'Imad al-Din, or indeed by many of the Arab chroniclers.

How did Ibn Shaddad write about Saladin's death? After his account of the last time that he and the Qadi al-Fadil had been with Saladin, he ends with the following simple but profoundly moving words: 'We left the citadel,

each longing to give his own life to ransom the sultan's.'[35] His intense, deeply felt and eloquent elegy on the death of Saladin comes right from the heart rather than from conventional flowery panegyric:

> Never since Islam and the Muslims lost the first caliphs, never from that time, had the faith and the faithful suffered a blow such as that they received on the day of the Sultan's death. The castle, the city, the whole world, were thereby plunged into grief, of which God alone could fathom the intensity.[36]

What light do Saladin's closest associates shed on his personality and how he lived when he was not campaigning? For all their intense and thorough focus on Saladin's military achievements and his prosecution of jihad, the three spin doctors do also on occasion discuss more personal aspects of Saladin's life. Ibn Shaddad reports that Saladin was very fond of his children but that he bore parting with them manfully. Saladin also wept bitter tears when he heard the news of the death of one of his nephews. He is described as being hospitable to guests, even the occasional Crusader one.

It is highly likely that when Saladin went back to his favourite city, Damascus, to rest in between his military campaigns, he would enjoy the usual court pursuits of a medieval Muslim ruler: giving banquets, falconry, hunting, listening to music and to poetry. On the other hand, Saladin disapproved of ostentation. On one occasion, seeing 'Imad al-Din writing from an inkwell embellished with silver, he condemned its usage. The inkwell was never seen in public again.

But it seems likely that in general Saladin and his entourage of close advisers had very little spare time for the pursuit of pleasure. In modern parlance, they may be labelled 'workaholics'. 'Imad al-Din reports that Saladin dictated letters to him at night. He then turned Saladin's words – it is not clear in which language Saladin used to dictate to him – into the flowery prose for which 'Imad al-Din is celebrated.

IV. Conclusions

Saladin is unusual in medieval Islamic history in that he had the benefit, so to speak, of three court biographers, three 'spin doctors', if you like: the Qadi al-Fadil, 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani and Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad. They have

all three left glowing accounts of their master. These provide more information for him than we have for previous Muslim rulers of the twelfth century, and what is much more, they have an unmistakable personal touch. On occasion, their devotion to him seems to transcend the customary panegyric and clichéd phrases familiar from court titulature on inscriptions and coins, so much so that it does seem that in Saladin we are dealing with an exceptional person.

The Qadi al-Fadil and 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani, one an Arab and one a Persian, were clearly what we might now call public intellectuals. They had, furthermore, been in Saladin's service for a very long time, without losing his favour. Both were deeply committed to promoting Saladin's image as a pious Muslim ruler and a fervent jihad warrior, a man who could show pity and dispense justice. As already mentioned, the Qadi al-Fadil was the rock on which Saladin leaned at all times. Al-'Umari (d. 1343) writes of him:

> The Qadi al-Fadil was the state of Saladin. He was its secretary, its vizier, its master, its adviser, and the supplier of its army. He carried all its burdens, ruled over all its regions . . . He was invested with full authority in the state of Saladin and was the one who decided on the fate of people and on matters of life and death.[37]

What of 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani? It is likely that he spent more time with Saladin than the Qadi al-Fadil, who for lengthy periods had to look after Egypt on Saladin's behalf, let alone Ibn Shaddad who joined Saladin's service much later. It is probable that alongside his superb literary versatility 'Imad al-Din must have been an entertaining companion for Saladin. Ibn Shaddad, on the other hand, joined Saladin's entourage in 1188, spending only five years with him at the very end of his life. Nevertheless, their daily relationship, at a time when Saladin was tired and unwell, was intense and very meaningful at a religious level.

Despite some differences of approach, Saladin is thus seen by his three spin doctors as the greatest Muslim opponent of the Crusaders. His rule forms the precise focus of these three men's writings and they are unanimous in their laudatory view of him. Of course, these three major advisers of Saladin were not the only people who contributed to the 'spin' around him. Famous Arab poets wrote long panegyrics about him and declaimed them in

Saladin's court. Moreover, contemporary Arab chroniclers praised Saladin's achievements, and later Muslim historians and biographers in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries eulogised him in hindsight, helping to create in the Muslim world a highly favourable image of Saladin, the victor over the Crusaders at Hattin, the Kurdish military leader and jihad warrior, who reconquered Jerusalem for Islam.

In modern times Saladin has been not just an inspirational model for military success but also for the political unification of the Arab world against the infidel and the external aggressor. Saddam Husayn, Hafez Asad and Muʿammar al-Qaddafi each promoted themselves publicly as the second Saladin. And yet others, like President Sadat of Egypt in the 1970s, have invoked him as one worthy of emulation by heads of state for his fabled qualities of generosity, compassion and tolerance towards those of other faiths. And that formidable and fragrant legacy rests most of all on the devotion of his spin doctors, which shines across the centuries.

Notes

1. V. Minorsky, *Studies in Caucasian History* (London, 1953), 107–57.
2. See A.-M. Eddé, *Saladin* (Paris, 2008); A.-M. Eddé, *Saladin*, tr. J. M. Todd (Cambridge, MA, 2011).
3. See J. Phillips, *The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin* (London, 2019).
4. A. Ehrenkreutz, *Saladin* (Albany, 1972); P. M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades: The Near East from the Eleventh Century to 1517* (London and New York, 1986).
5. N. Elisséeff, *Un grand prince musulman de Syrie au temps des Croisades*, 2 vols (Damascus, 1967).
6. The great medieval Muslim historian Ibn al-Athir (d. 1233), who wrote in detail about the Crusading period, was clearly biased in favour of Nur al-Din and his Zengid dynasty and he was discreetly critical of Saladin; Ibn al-Athir, *Ta'rikh al-dawla al-atabakiyya*, ed. ʿA. K. Tulaymat (Cairo, 1963).
7. H. R. Dajani-Shakeel, *Al-Qadi al-Fadil: His Life and Political Career*, PhD thesis (University of Michigan, 1972).
8. The Arabic text of this document is given in A. H. Helbig, *Al-Qadi al-Fadil, der Wezir Saladins* (Leipzig, 1908), 53–64.
9. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-aʿyan*, tr. W. M. de Slane as *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary*, 4 vols (Paris, 1843–71), II, 112.

10. *Kitab al-fath al-qussi fi'l-fath al-qudsi*, ed. C. Landberg (Leiden, 1888). Note the rhyming and punning title of this work. See also ʻImad al-Din al-Isfahani, *Conquête de la Syrie*, tr. H. Massé (Paris, 1972).
11. Gabrieli comments that this is an important author for Saladin's life, but he adds that concrete details are lost in a complicated mass of verbiage; F. Gabrieli, *Arab Historians of the Crusades* (Oakland, CA, 1969), xxx.
12. For a detailed biography of Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad, see *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary*, tr. de Slane, IV, 417–35.
13. Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad, *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin or al-nawadir al-sultaniyya wa'l-mahasin al-Yusufiyya*, tr. D. S. Richards (Aldershot, 2001), 81.
14. *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary*, tr. de Slane, IV, 541.
15. Ibn Shaddad, *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin*, 243–4.
16. Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad, *Al-nawadir al-sultaniyya*, ed. J. El-Shayyal (Cairo, 1964).
17. H. Dajani-Shakeel, *Al-Qadi al-Fadil ʻAbd al-Rahim al-ʻAsqalani* (Beirut, 1993), 54.
18. *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary*, tr. de Slane, II, 112; I. Hafsi, 'Correspondance officielle et privée d'al-Qadi al-Fadil', PhD thesis, 4 vols (University of Paris, 1980), III.
19. Al-Bundari, *Sana' al-barq al-shami*, ed. R. Şeṣen (Beirut, 1971), 233–7.
20. *Diwan al-Qadi al-Fadil*, eds A. Badawi and I. al-Ibyari (Cairo, 1961).
21. Dajani-Shakeel, *Al-Qadi al-Fadil* (Beirut, 1993), 17.
22. Ibid., 26.
23. M. C. Lyons and D. E. P. Jackson, *Saladin: The Politics of the Holy War* (Cambridge, 1982), 118.
24. Al-Wahrani, *Manamat al-Wahrani*, quoted by Hadia Dajani-Shakeel, *Al-Qadi al-Fadil* (Beirut, 1993), 27.
25. *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary*, tr. de Slane, IV, 515ff.
26. For a detailed analysis of the writing of ʻImad al-Din al-Isfahani, see L. Richter-Bernburg, *Der Syrische Blitz. Saladins Sekretär zwischen Selbstdarstellung und Geschichtsschreibung* (Beirut, 1990), esp. 257–382, where passages of the text are translated.
27. C. Cahen, 'Review of ʻImad al-Din al-Isfahani. tr. Henri Massé, *Conquête de la Syrie et de la Palestine par Saladin*', *Arabica* 21 (1974), 213–14.
28. See P. M. Holt's review of Henri Massé's translation of *Al-fath al-qussi*, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 37 (1974), 691–3.

29. For a balanced account of 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani, see D. S. Richards, ''Imad al-Din al-Isfahani: administrator, littérateur and historian', in M. Shatzmiller (ed.), *Crusaders and Muslims in Twelfth-century Syria* (Leiden, 1993), 133–46.
30. This phrase is Gabrieli's in *Arab Historians*, 204, n. 2.
31. Tr. Gabrieli, *Arab Historians*, 204.
32. Al-Bundari, *Sana' al-barq al-shami*, 244.
33. Gabrieli, *Arab Historians*, 134.
34. In the detailed introduction to his translation of Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad, Richards explains the structure of the book; see *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin*, 1–9.
35. Ibid., 243.
36. Quoted by Lyons and Jackson, *Saladin*, 374.
37. Dajani-Shakeel, *Al-Qadi al-Fadil* (Beirut, 1993), 1.

20

The Sultan, the Kaiser, the Colonel and the Purloined Wreath

The Sultan

When Saladin died on 27 Safar 589/4 March 1193, it might have been expected that he would have asked his devoted courtiers to bury him in the Holy City of Jerusalem, which he had re-conquered for Islam in 1187. But this was not to be. Saladin's favourite place of residence was the city of Damascus where, far from the heavy demands of military campaigns, he rested each year enjoying the company of his family and his court. The great medieval Arab biographer Ibn Khallikan (d. 1282) wrote that Saladin 'liked that city and preferred it as a residence to all others'.[1]

His mausoleum (Figure 20.1) stands some 20 metres to the north-west of the much-venerated Umayyad mosque in Damascus. His body had been buried provisionally in the Damascus citadel on the day that he died. Ibn Khallikan wrote the following account of Saladin's burial: '[The body of] Salah al-Din remained interred within the citadel of Damascus until a tomb was built for its reception [. . .] to the north of the Great Mosque of Damascus.'[2] The medieval Arab historian Abu Shama (d. 1267) added further details. He described the building of the mausoleum and the removal there of Saladin's body by his eldest son, al-Afdal, who succeeded him as ruler of Damascus. According to Abu Shama, al-Afdal bought a house suitable for the burial place (of his father) to the north near the Friday mosque. He then ordered a *qubba* (domed shrine) to be built and he carried the body there on the Day of "Ashura in the year 592'.[3] The Day of 'Ashura, the tenth of the month of Muharram, is a sacred day for Muslims. The exact date on which Saladin's

Figure 20.1 Saladin's mausoleum, Damascus
(<www.flickr.com/photos/26085795@N02/4708346719/>)

body, placed in a carved wooden sarcophagus, was taken from the citadel was Thursday, 10 Muharram 592/15 December 1195. It should be noted that Saladin's mausoleum is a simple square domed chamber of the type favoured for Ayyubid notables.[4] His coffin (Figures 20.2 and 20.3) is now covered in a cloth of green, the holy colour of Islam. There, in close proximity to the Umayyad mosque, the most prestigious sanctuary in Syria, this great hero rested in peace for some eight centuries.

The Kaiser

As John Röhl's biography points out, Kaiser Wilhelm II (1859–1940) was convinced that he 'had a duty to lead Germany to greatness'. Röhl describes the Kaiser as 'young, hot-headed Wilhelm II, eager for action and craving recognition'.[5] From 1890 onwards Kaiser Wilhelm set out to expand his

Figure 20.2 The coffins in Saladin's mausoleum, Damascus (image courtesy of the author)

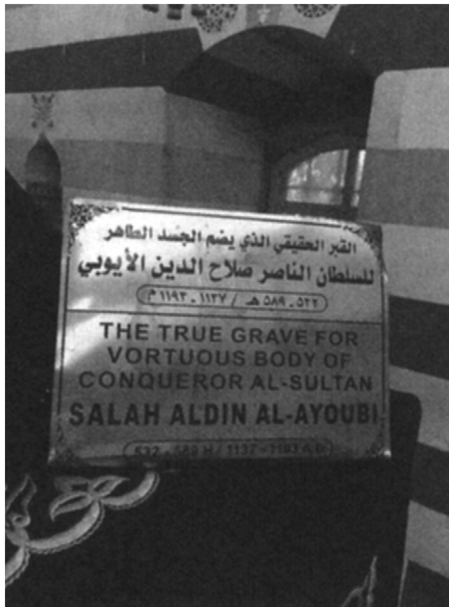

Figure 20.3 Plaque on Saladin's coffin, Damascus (image courtesy of the author)

empire eastwards, and indeed outside Europe, as a crucial element in his plan to make Germany a global power. The large-scale transportation of important monuments, or parts of monuments, from the Ottoman domains in Turkey, and from the lands that are now Jordan and Iraq, to be re-erected in the hugely expanded state museum in Berlin represented the cultural arm of this same policy. A high point of his increasingly provocative 'world power politics' (*Weltmachtpolitik*) was his spectacular state visit to Istanbul, Haifa, Jerusalem, Beirut and Damascus in the autumn of 1898. Wearing the uniform of a Prussian field-marshal, he made a swaggering entry on horseback into Jerusalem on 29 October 1898 to consecrate the Church of the Redeemer, accompanied by the Empress Augusta. The impact of his visit to the city was considerable; indeed, a breach was made in the city wall to allow him to enter in style.

Moving on to Damascus, Kaiser Wilhelm visited the mausoleum in which, it was still generally believed, Saladin's sculpted walnut wood coffin had been finally placed on 15 December 1195.[6] There the Kaiser also saw a second coffin, lavishly made of white marble, which had been placed next to the wooden sarcophagus in 1878 by the Ottoman sultan 'Abd al-Hamid II; doubtless, to the sultan's mind, this was a more deserving sarcophagus for a personage as celebrated as Saladin than the twelfth-century masterpiece then in place. The great French historian of Islamic architecture, Jean Sauvaget, fiercely described this second coffin as 'horrible'. He explained that there were two coffins in the mausoleum which had been placed side by side; he much preferred the older one made from sculpted walnut, interlaced with geometrical designs and floral and vegetal decoration, which dates mostly from the Ayyubid period.[7] In his recent book on Saladin, Jonathan Phillips rightly points out that 'the cenotaph itself is of an Ottoman baroque style, a mark of modernity at the time, and it remains in place today, looking uncomfortably bulky next to its venerable stablemate'.[8]

During his visit to Saladin's tomb, the Kaiser praised Saladin as 'one of the most chivalrous rulers of all time', and referring to the Ottoman sultan, he declared: 'May the Sultan and the 300 million Mahomedans who live scattered throughout the world and who revere him as their Caliph, rest assured that the German Kaiser will be their friend for all time.'[9] The Empress Augusta then placed a bronze wreath on Saladin's tomb: this was a very dramatic gesture.[10]

News of it spread across the Middle East and had a great impact. Indeed, as Huw Strachan points out, the rumours in the Arab street were that the Kaiser had even visited Mecca and converted to Islam; he was dubbed 'Hajji Wilhelm'.[11] And so, from 1878 until recently (see later), Saladin's mausoleum has housed two coffins, although there is no proof at all that Saladin's remains were ever removed from his simple coffin to the larger and grander newer one.

The Colonel

Shortly before the Amir Faisal, who had led the Arab revolt against the Ottomans in 1916, made a theatrical entrance into Damascus on horseback on 1 October 1918, he had ordered some of his men to remove the Kaiser's bronze wreath from Saladin's tomb. Indeed, not surprisingly, the wreath had come to be viewed as a symbol of the Ottoman–German alliance hated by the Arabs. Amir Faisal stayed in Damascus only for a very short while. The British Colonel T. E. Lawrence, 'of Arabia', was with him at that time and, according to one account, it appears that Faisal presented him with the wreath. On 11 November that same year, the very day that the Great War ended, Lawrence gave the wreath to a museum in London, subsequently renamed the Imperial War Museum, and he claimed in his deposit note that he had removed the wreath himself: 'as Saladin no longer required it'.[12]

According to Lowell Thomas (d. 1981), Lawrence's devoted 'spin-doctor', Amir Faisal and Lawrence enjoyed a warm friendship. He wrote:

> Colonel Lawrence remained in Damascus only four days. But during that time he was the virtual ruler of the city, and one of his first moves was to visit the tomb of Saladin, where the Kaiser, back in 1898, had placed a satin flag and a bronze laurel wreath inscribed in Turkish and Arabic: 'From one great emperor to another.'[13]

It is interesting to note that Lowell Thomas misleads the reader by misquoting part of the inscription on the wreath.

The Purloined Wreath[14]

As the Imperial War Museum records on its website:

> The wreath is a very significant item accessioned as part of the IWM Collections. This significance relates not only to Lawrence, Feisal and the

Figure 20.4 The Kaiser's wreath, Imperial War Museum, London, EPH 4338 (image courtesy of the author)

> Kaiser, but also has a broader symbolic importance reflecting the German influence in the Ottoman empire, the end of the Palestine campaign and the portents for the post war political outcome for the region.[15]

The wreath is bronze with a gilt finish; at its widest it is 74 centimetres (Figures 20.4 and 20.5). When and where was it made? Kaiser Wilhelm probably ordered the making of the wreath some considerable time before he left on his famous journey to the Middle East. Such an elaborate artefact

would have taken many weeks to create. It may be concluded that he had long intended to visit Saladin's mausoleum in Damascus and that he wanted to record that event with due pomp and ceremony. Where and when exactly the Arabic and Ottoman Turkish inscriptions were placed on the wreath is still unknown, but it would seem most likely that this intricate work was carried out in Germany by an imported Ottoman calligrapher before the Kaiser left on his trip to the Middle East. It is time to look more closely at the detailed parts of this intricate artefact.

The Crown

As with so much else in the royal progress of Kaiser Wilhelm through the Middle Eastern domains of the Ottoman Sultan ʻAbd al-Hamid II, such as the gaudy, faux-Islamic triumphal arch hastily erected in Jerusalem to commemorate his visit, this wreath is packed with rather heavy-handed imperial symbolism. There is little doubt that its principal purpose is to exalt the Kaiser rather than Saladin, even though already at this stage this Kurdish hero was the most famous Muslim in the world apart from the Prophet Muhammad. And it exalted not just the Kaiser, but also his religion. For at the apex of his crown, and at the very top of the wreath, is a small cross; a much larger cross is at the centre of the crown's lower half, its importance underlined by the trefoil arch which outlines it and is much larger than the flanking arches which depict affronted eagles with outspread wings. This was the familiar way in which the German eagle (*der deutsche Adler*) was rendered in German imperial symbolism at the time (Figure 20.5).

The monogram and crown are superimposed on a semi-circular band draped over the top of the laurel wreath, a band which holds two eagles on either side of the crown. Between each pair of eagles there flaps the end of a fringed clerical stole bearing yet another cross in a medallion. Nor is this the last time the eagles appear: they recur in alternation with a cross in the semi-circular lower termination, like a swag, which reveals itself as the lower half of the curved band flanking the monogram. At the lower centre of this band there hangs a large Maltese cross with a tiny winged figure, legs akimbo, between each bar. So this tribute to Saladin comprises not a single Muslim element, neither crescent nor star, but instead has no fewer than *eight Christian crosses* and *ten German eagles*.

Figure 20.5 Imperial German eagle employed until 1918 (David Liuzzo, *Wikimedia Commons*)

The crown is identical to that depicted in contemporary images of the Kaiser; it is in fact the imperial German crown. As for the laurel wreath as a signal mark of honour, this was eagerly adapted by German tradition from the classical Graeco-Roman past, and its individual overlapping crinkled leaves, berries and twigs have been meticulously rendered.

The monogram reads W II IR, which can be translated as 'Wilhelm *der Zweite*, Imperator [et] Rex' and which was the way he signed himself.[16] The pomp and circumstance of this self-applied title of *IR* was gently mocked in later years as standing for '*Immer Reisend*' ('Forever on the Move') in reference to his love of travel. It thus has a peculiar and ironic relevance to this luxury object, connected as it is to one of his grandest tours. It is triumphantly of its time and place both in its tightly compressed design and in the forms of the individual letters themselves. The crown clearly displays features which reflect the influence of German Art Nouveau (*Jugendstil*) which flourished in the 1890s and the early twentieth century.[17] The light serifs of the I and the II allude to the majesty of Roman lettering, but the bulging, spatulate letters, the powerful curves of the W, and the block-like power of the R have numerous *Jugendstil* parallels in contemporary German Gothic lettering of the more imaginative kind as found in books, posters and coins.

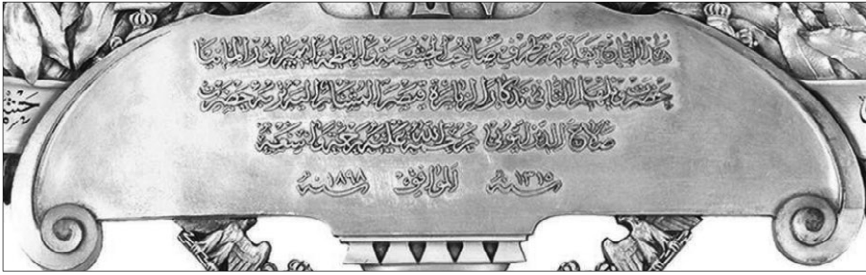

Figure 20.6 Detail of Arabic inscription below the Kaiser's monogram, from Figure 20.4

The Arabic Inscription under the Kaiser's Monogram

The Arabic inscription placed under the Kaiser's monogram (Figure 20.6) is written in a finely controlled cursive calligraphic script. An attempt at translating it has been placed near the wreath in the Imperial War Museum. This anonymous translation covers only part of the whole inscription and, as it stands, it unfortunately contains a number of errors and omissions. It reads as follows: 'This crown was presented by His Majesty, the Emperor (His presence [*sic*], Wilhelm the Second in memory of his pilgrimage to the tomb of His presence [*sic*], Salah al-Din al-Ajubi [*sic*].' The Arabic term *hadratuhu*, mistranslated here as 'His presence', is a grandiose phrase meaning 'His Excellency'. The title written here as *al-Ajubi* refers to the family name of Saladin, Ayyubid, and it should be rendered as *al-Ayyubi*; Saladin's father was called Ayyub. Here is a full and accurate translation of this Arabic inscription:

> This crown was presented by the Lord of magnificence and grandeur, the Emperor of Germany, His Excellency Wilhelm II, as a memorial of the Emperor's visit to Damascus in order to eulogise His Excellency Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi, may the mercy of God be upon him, in the year 1315/1898.

The other inscriptions punctuating this circular wreath in six more or less equally spaced bands are in Ottoman Turkish. That is not an easy language at the best of times; and in this case the elaborate and rather mannered calligraphy creates further difficulties. But what it says, reading the six bands horizontally across the wreath from right to left in three successive tiers, is an Ottoman Turkish translation of the major Arabic inscription below the Kaiser's monogram, as presented earlier.

Figure 20.7 Detail of Arabic quotation at the bottom of the wreath, from Figure 20.4

The Arabic Quotation at the Bottom of the Wreath

The short Arabic quotation in flowing cursive script at the bottom of the wreath (Figure 20.7), 'Verily, God loves those who do good' – *inna Allaha yuhibbu al-muhsinin* – has resonances of Sura 12 of the Qur'an, entitled the Sura of Joseph. This chapter uses the term *al-muhsinin* ('those who do good') more often than any other chapter in the Qur'an. The story of Joseph and his brothers is told at considerable length in this chapter. In it, Joseph is presented as the epitome of virtue, who is merciful to his brothers despite their ill-treatment of him. It is no coincidence that here on the wreath placed on the tomb of Saladin there is an allusion to Joseph. One of Saladin's names, which is used frequently of him in the primary Arabic sources, is Joseph (his personal name in Arabic being Yusuf) and it is found repeatedly in the speeches and sermons that deal with his most famous triumphs – his victory at the battle of Hattin and his re-conquest of Jerusalem. For example, the poet Ibn Sana' al-Mulk (d. 1211) praised Saladin after his glorious victory against the crusaders at Hattin in 1187 and he addresses Saladin with these words: 'You have never shown yourself in battles, without appearing, O Joseph, as beautiful as Joseph (in the Qur'an).'[18]

It should also be mentioned that the full title of the well-known biography of Saladin, written by his devoted administrator and friend Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad (d. 1234), is *Al-nawadir al-sultaniyya wa'l-mahasin al-Yusufiyya*

('the sultan's rare deeds and Joseph-like merits').[19] The semantic connection in Arabic between the word *mahasin* ('merits') and the Qur'anic word *muhsinin* ('those who do good') quoted on the wreath would not have been lost on any pious Muslim. This small inscription is therefore a well-chosen compliment to Saladin, extolling his rare accomplishments and achievements and his pious deeds which resemble those of his namesake, the Qur'anic Joseph.

Conclusion

Even without the presence of the wreath placed on Saladin's tomb by Kaiser Wilhelm in 1898, the story of Saladin's burial place in Damascus remains ongoing. Indeed, there has recently been an extraordinary and unexpected new chapter in the history of Saladin's burial place. It concerns a recently arrived third sarcophagus, which contains the body of Muhammad Sa'id Ramadani al-Bouti, a famous Syrian Sunni Muslim cleric and strong supporter of President Asad. Al-Bouti was assassinated in a mosque in Damascus in 2013.

Despite considerable local opposition, al-Bouti was not buried, as might have been expected, outside in the area adjacent to Saladin's tomb, an area which enshrines the graves of several senior Ottoman clerics and administrators and which is still within the compound of the shrine itself. Instead, the coffin of al-Bouti was placed inside Saladin's mausoleum, on the far left as one enters, and next to the large marble tomb donated by Sultan 'Abd al-Hamid II which has remained empty, despite his wish that Saladin's body should be placed within it.

Local people still firmly believe that Saladin's body has remained in the original wooden sarcophagus which is on the right when one enters the mausoleum. One might well ask why al-Bouti should have been put there and certainly this choice of burial place for him sparked controversy among Syrian opposition activists. Messages soon appeared on Twitter, apologising to Saladin and asking for his forgiveness. The funeral was televised live on 21 March 2013, showing crowds of men carrying a white-draped casket into the mausoleum. Perhaps these supporters felt it appropriate that al-Bouti should be placed in close proximity to Saladin, as al-Bouti was also a famous Kurd. The jury is still out on this issue.[20]

But to go back finally to the wreath, it may confidently be argued that its symbolism unmistakably vaunts the power of the Kaiser, whose monogram takes instant pride of place above the name of Saladin, who is effectively demoted twice, not only below the name of the Kaiser but also rendered on a much smaller scale. The symbolic meaning is clear: Saladin is less important than the Kaiser. In short it pretends to be one thing – a tribute to Saladin – but in reality it is quite another, namely a piece of imperial self-aggrandisement. Indeed, to many a Muslim eye its plethora of crosses, with their inbuilt Crusading resonances, would seem a staggeringly insensitive way of honouring the very man who defeated the Crusaders, captured Jerusalem and removed the giant cross from the top of the Dome of the Rock. In short, this whole wreath is an act of consummate colonialism – and all the more sinister if that motive was unconscious. No wonder Lawrence of Arabia, with his deep and passionate commitment to the Arab cause, loathed it and took it to London.

Acknowledgements

By writing this chapter I am discharging a debt of *pietas* owed to the late, much-loved and respected Jonathan Riley-Smith. I promised Jonathan that I would work on Saladin's wreath and I am happy to dedicate this contribution to his memory.

Notes

1. Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-a'yan*, tr. Baron MacGuckin de Slane as *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary*, vol. 4 (Beirut, 1970), 541.
2. Ibid., 546.
3. Abu Shama, *Kitab al-rawdatayn*, in *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades: Historiens Orientaux*vol. 5 (Paris, 1906), 94.
4. The Ayyubids, in common with other Near Eastern dynasties such as the Zengids, the Rum Seljuqs and the Mamluks, followed a fashion widespread in the medieval Islamic world of building mausolea for their elites. For this process see O. Grabar, 'The earliest Islamic commemorative structures: notes and documents', *Ars Orientalis* 6 (1966), 7–45 and T. Leisten, *Architektur für Tote* (Berlin, 1998). As it happens, Ayyubid Syria was a particular hub for such buildings; the mausoleum of Saladin was a typical example.

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20. Grateful thanks are due to Alasdair Gordon-Gibson for his pictures of Saladin’s mausoleum and information about al-Bouti’s tomb.

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